

EDMONTON'S 100% INDEPENDENT NEWS & ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY

VUEWEEKLY

NO. 540 / FEB 23 - MAR 1, 2006 | FREE
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OUR MERCURY

10 years on, schoolyard buddies have grown from petty Misdemeanors
to nationally distributed punk phenomenon
[TYSON KABAN / 10]

EDUCATION: GET SMART
ON FREE TUITION,
LEARNING TO COOK
AND THE RELEVANCE
OF ART SCHOOL / 5, 20, 22

FILM: HARLAN COUNTY, USA / 27
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You're not boiling water; why should reserves?

KRISTINE DWRAM / kristine@vueweekly.com

On Monday, the CBC released a report stating that two-thirds of Canada's First Nations reserves are still under boil-water advisories, despite the nearly \$2 billion spent by the federal government in addressing the problem since 2001. According to the report, some of these advisories have been in place for as long as 11 years, and 62 per cent of on-reserve water operators aren't properly certified.

Canada is a developed country with the technology and resources to fix these problems immediately, so why have so many people been forced to live with sub-par water quality for so long? According to the CBC, the biggest issue is that there is no legislation in place requiring the quality of drinking water on reserves to be monitored. On top of that, reserve leaders complain that a lack of funding and available expertise simply compound the problem.

Ultimately, this is an appalling example of what a lack of public interest in an issue can mean. It is hard to believe that problems on the scale of those in Kashechewan, where chlorine levels in the water meant people couldn't even bathe without developing skin rashes, would have been allowed to continue for so long if they were happening off-reserve.

The responsibility for this falls squarely on the shoulders of the federal government. According to CBC Online, "Indian and Northern Affairs is in a tug-of-war over funding and how best to spend money to ensure the safety of drinking water." It's time they stop arguing and start taking action. The health and safety of Canadian citizens is at stake, and this is not an issue that's going to go away on its own.

At the end of the day, this is actually a relatively simple problem to fix. If the biggest issue is a lack of legislation ensuring the consistent monitoring of water quality on reserves, let's put that legislation in place. Sure, it won't be cheap to upgrade current facilities and train qualified monitors, but money shouldn't be an issue when the basic quality of life of hundreds of thousands of our citizens is at risk. ▽



MAIL LETTERS

BUY FLU REMEDIES WITHOUT FEAR OF LOSING PRIVACY

The ruling from the privacy commissioner you refer to in your story about pharmacists collecting personal information before dispensing certain drugs ("Your pusher wants to know more about you," Feb 16 - 22) applied only to insulin.

We are not encouraging pharmacists to collect information about Schedule 2 drugs other than insulin. WAYNE WOOD, Communications Director, Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner

CALL MALCOLM X A QUEER, BUT GET THE FACTS RIGHT

With respect, the late Mrs King's name was Coretta Scott King, not Rosetta as noted in last week's 3 Dollar Bill column. Whether the rest of the content of this column is factual or not, when employing the words and beliefs of someone of that lady's stature, it would behoove the author to get the name right.

It leads me to wonder if he read any of her speech at all or merely employed a useful sampling of her words. How will readers know if they are employed within their intended

context? It seems to me his cause would be better served if backed by accurate writing.

CHARLENE D'APRAT O'FEE

IN SHORT, REDESIGN LICKS

I just wanted to write and offer a suggestion about your layout and design: it needs work.

After having picked up this week's issue, I notice that the display type within has a thinner weight than the caption text. There is also very little hierarchy throughout, making it difficult to read, let alone want to read.

I know that ads pay for this thing, but going through the paper, there seem to be so many that they are swallowing up the rest of the publication. The ads are so much more gaudy and bold than the content that they are all I see when perusing the paper.

Design can make all the difference, and right now it seems that *See*, albeit not much better, has you bested in legibility in design, at least.

DON EGLINSKI

Vue Weekly welcomes reader response, whether critical or complimentary. Send you opinion by mail (Vue Weekly, 10303 - 108 Street, Edmonton AB T5J 1L7), by fax (780.426.2889) or by e-mail (letters@vueweekly.com). Preference is given to feedback about articles in Vue Weekly. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity.

Pimping kinda legal

ROSS MOROZ / ross@vueweekly.com

The way the sex trade is licensed in Alberta could trade change drastically after a judge threw out several charges living off of the avails of prostitution being faced by a Calgary escort agency operator.

The judge agreed with Liaisons Escort Agency owner Doug East-

NEWS | SEX

ough's contention that, because the City of Calgary had issued him a license to operate an escort agency, he didn't believe he was breaking the law.

In his ruling, the judge wrote that Eastough's actions, while illegal, stemmed from an "officially induced error" because the city did not make it clear enough that an "escort service" is, legally speaking, not supposed to promote prostitution.

The ruling has broad implications for the way prostitution-related offenses are tried in Alberta, and could force municipalities to re-write their escort agency bylaws. ▽

Issue No. 539 / February 16 - 22, 2006 / Available at over 1,400 locations

VUEWEEKLY

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PRINTING: THE EDMONTON SUN
DISTRIBUTION: Marty Anderson, Alan Ching, Derek Mohammed, Bob Riley, Wally Yanish, Clark Distribution

Vue Weekly is available free of charge at well over 1,400 locations throughout Edmonton. We are funded solely through the support of our advertisers. *Vue Weekly* is a division of 783783 Alberta Ltd and is published every Thursday.

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Spot the typo!

We're not especially good spellers, as some of you are fond of pointing out, so we can pretty much guarantee that there's a typo, grammatical error or some other boo-boo in this issue. The first person to send an e-mail to dan@vueweekly.com detailing such a find wins his or her pick from the astoundingly horrible pile of CDs and books in our offices.

U of A SU acquires chunk of Travel Cuts

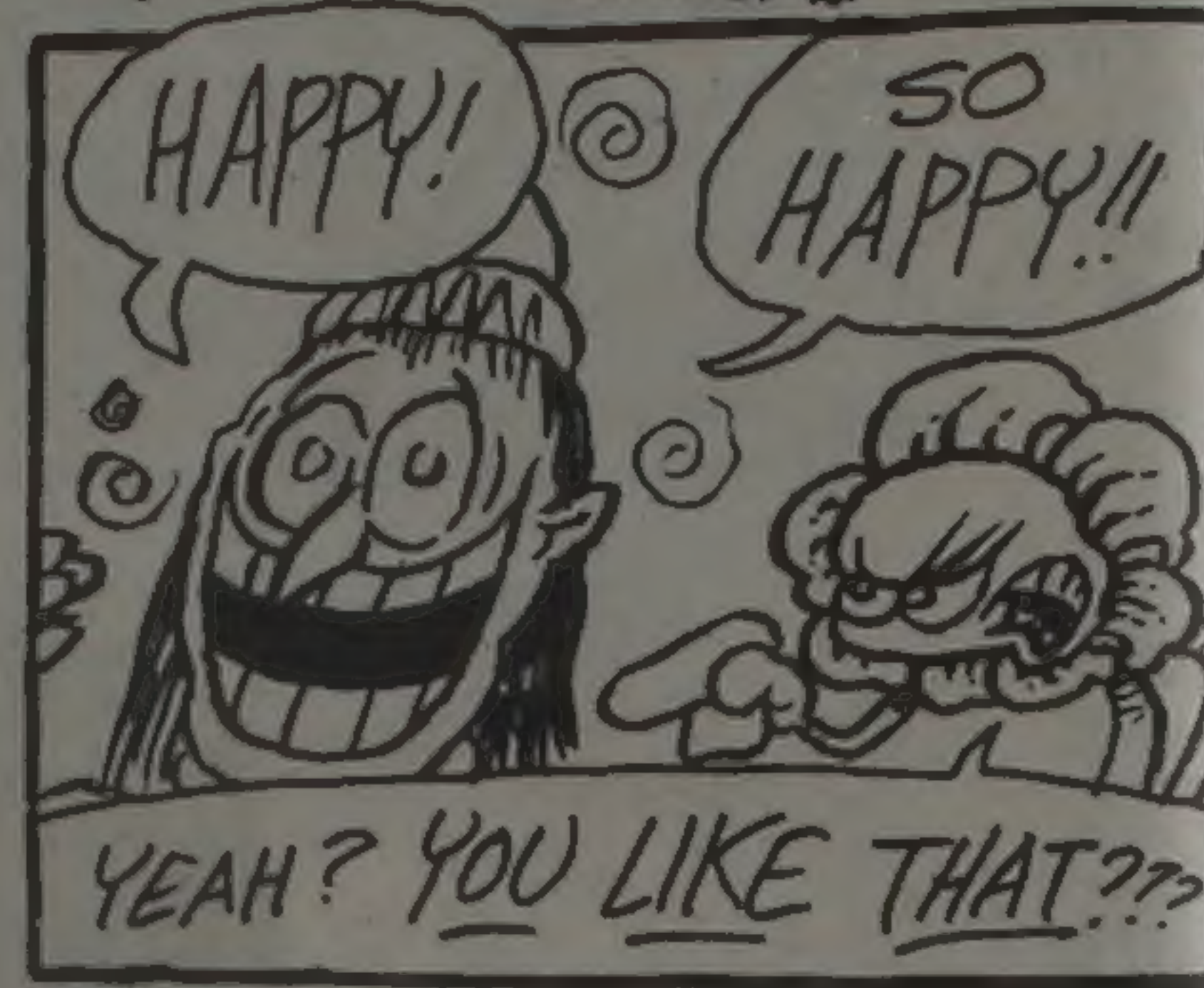
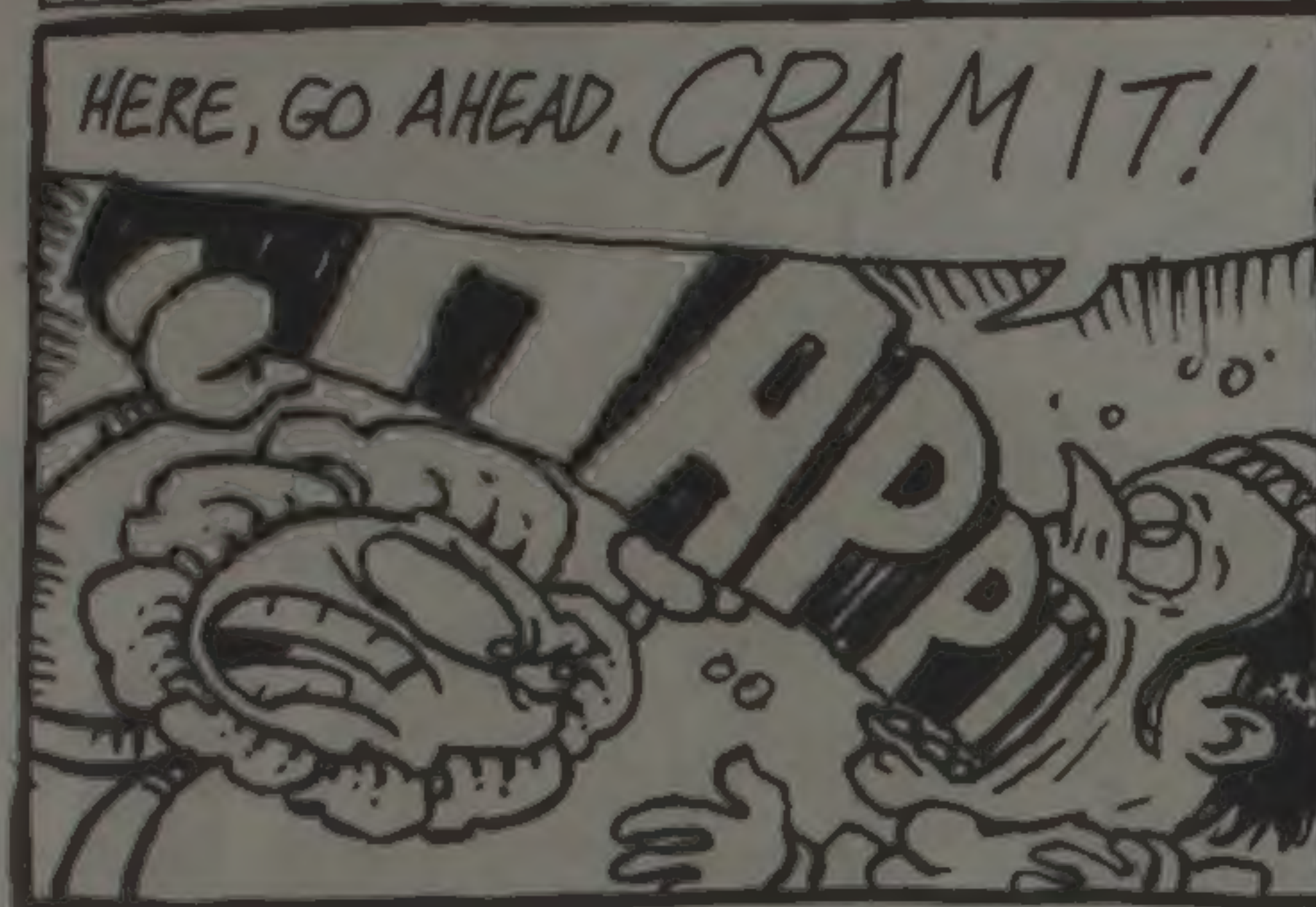
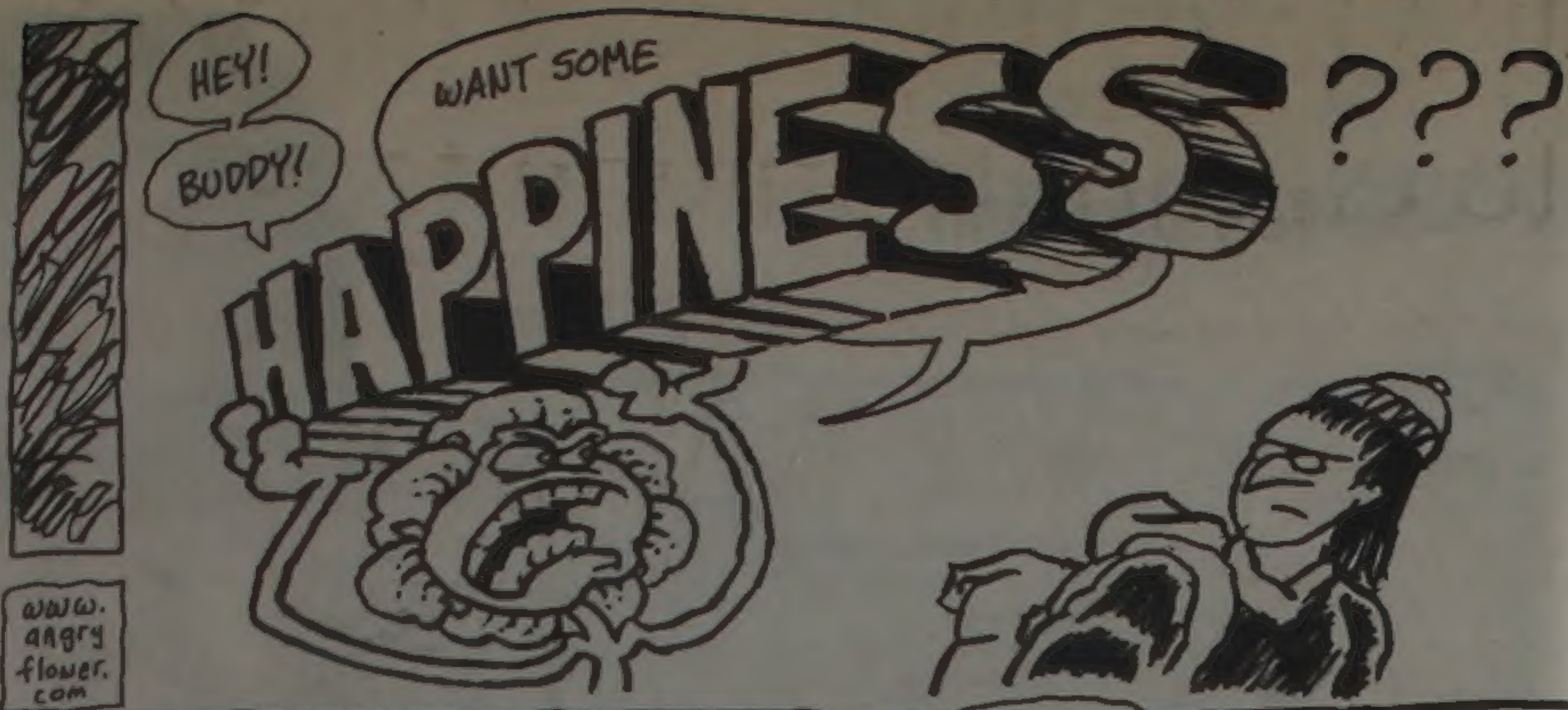
DAN LAZIN / dan@vueweekly.com

A long-running legal dispute between a handful of students' unions and the the national student organization that owns the Travel Cuts travel agency been settled, with the SUs—including the U of A's—gaining 24 per cent ownership in the valuable business.

The out-of-court settlement gives those shares to a new for-profit company owned by the student associations at the U of A, University of British Columbia, University of Western Ontario, Queen's University and other schools.

Until 1987, Travel Cuts was owned by the Association of Students' Councils-Canada, now dormant, of which the U of A SU and the other schools were members. When the AOSC was shut down to make room for two competing national student organizations, one of them—the Canadian Federation of Students—gained the whole travel agency.

The U of A and the other schools were never members of CFS and claimed they were shut out of the decision to change the company's ownership. ▽



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It'd take the luck of the Irish to eliminate tuition fees

BUT WE MIGHT LEARN SOMETHING FROM IRELAND'S FREE-UNIVERSITY POLICY

ADAM ROZENHART / adam@vuweekly.com

Just over a year ago, Premier Ralph Klein promised an overhaul of Alberta's post-secondary education system. He said that by September 2006, the province would have a new tuition policy, making it one of the most affordable in the country.

But according to Bill Moore-Kilgannon, the executive director of Public Interest Alberta, too few voices have been included in the initial discussions.

"The consultations the province conducted were done by invite only, so certain key groups and members of the public at large weren't necessarily involved in those discussions," Moore-Kilgannon says.

In order to assess how Albertans feel about the province's post-secondary education track record, PIA held its own consultations with the public—eight in total, conducted across the province between Sep 29 and Oct 14.

The culmination of these consultations is PIA's At the Crossroads conference, which runs Feb 24 through 26 and includes presentations from local, provincial, national and even international educators and policymakers.

David Robinson, associate executive director of the Canadian Association of University Teachers, says that the conference is a good opportunity to discuss how other regions and countries fund their post-secondary institutions.

"In Alberta and Ontario, we're seeing a move to a user-pay system," Robinson says. "Neo-classical economists are saying that we should increase fees that students pay and make up the difference with grants and scholarships and that would bring more students to universities."

"But that totally ignores the laws of supply and demand; the more expensive education gets, the less people can afford to attend, and therefore the demand for it decreases."

Robinson notes that in places like Scandinavia, where students aren't subject to fees, enrolment numbers are dramatically higher than in countries like Canada or the United States.

In Ireland, for another example, university fees were eliminated in 1996, and enrolment has soared.

"There are indications that, 10 years on, the abolition of fees has increased access to the financially less advantaged in [Irish] society," explains Peter MacMenamin, deputy general secretary of the Teachers' Union Ireland. He's joining *Globe and Mail* columnist Jeffrey Simpson for the conference's keynote lecture on Feb 24.

"The Irish approach to investment in education has led to the increase in participation from four to five per cent in the 1960s to over 55 per cent in higher education alone," MacMenamin says.

MacMenamin believes that the less accessible post-secondary education becomes, the more divisive society will be come.

"Under no circumstance should [higher education] be only available to the elite in financial terms. This fosters social division. Higher education gen-

LECTURE FRI, FEB 24 (7:30 PM)
JEFFREY SIMPSON,
PETER MACMENAMIN
CROWNE PLAZA HOTEL, \$10

erally correlates with higher earnings: to only admit the wealthy continues this divide," MacMenamin said.

Dave Hancock, Alberta's minister of advanced education, agrees that accessibility is an important issue. He said that the government plans give students greater access to post-secondary education by putting more money into student loans, endowments and scholarships.

"We've gone through a year of looking at post-secondary education and making the commitment to adding 60 000 student spaces over the

next 15 years," Hancock said. "I believe that no matter where you come from, every Albertan should have every opportunity to be whatever they want to be."

Hancock stopped short of saying that tuition fees would ever be eliminated in Alberta, adding that boosting literacy and convincing Albertans that attending college or university are greater priorities.

"I think we have a philosophy that students and their families have a contribution to make to the cost of education. It's a good investment and they should be a part of it," he said.

Hancock says that nations that move to eliminate tuition fees aren't necessarily providing adequate access since they aren't targeting problems like illiteracy. Still, he hopes that he can learn from the other conference presenters who live and work outside of the province and country.

"We have to be world leaders in some areas if we're going to compete in the global marketplace." ▼



ILLUSTRATION BY GRAHAM JOHNSON

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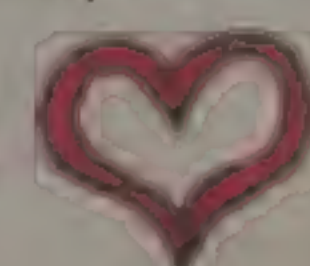


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Rhonda Glaty
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The Dances of Hall



Adrienne Gould
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Procedure for Auditions

Audition candidates are selected from résumés received and will be contacted individually by telephone. All auditions for the Stratford Festival of Canada are by appointment only.

Selected applicants should prepare audition pieces consisting of:

- Two contrasting classical monologues, one of which must be in verse (maximum two minutes each).
- One contemporary monologue (maximum two minutes).

Applicants should be prepared for a callback audition.

Finalists may be required to attend a final callback in Toronto (travel provided if required).

Applications must be received by March 31, 2006.

Audition four commences May 2006.

The Conservatory is a paid program, with no tuition fees.

Following the 2006 session, participants will be offered places in the 2007 acting company.

Interested individuals should send a résumé, photo and cover letter detailing their reasons for applying to the Conservatory to:

Director's Office, Conservatory Applications,
Stratford Festival of Canada

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email: auditions@stratfordfestival.ca

<http://www.stratfordfestival.ca/events/conservatory.cfm>



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Canadian Heritage

If we were the sort to have glitter on our cheeks, this would be so much fun

ZENKO!
DISPATCH
DARREN ZENKO
dispatch@vancouverweekly.com

FEB 17, 2006 — WEST (WEST!) EDMONTON (EDMONTON!) MALL (MALL!)

Malls are and have always been cartoon simulations of the traditional human spaces—markets, bazaars, public shopping streets, parks and plazas—they displace, but West Edmonton Mall takes it all the way; every zone's a little Disneyland.

"Bourbon Street" reaches feebly to attach the partytime cachet of the legendary New Orleans drinking district to its collection of characterless chain bars-and-grill; the lagoon and waterpark strive to evoke a wallet-loosening spirit of Caribbean fun 'n' sun in the throngs of snowed-in credit-cardholders; "Europa Boulevard", though it tumbles further downmarket with every passing season, still works hard at aping a classy Continental vibe.

So what pop-culture theme is the usually vacant glass-walled space in front of HMV, thronged with aspiring Canadian Idols, going for this morning? "Dystopian sci-fi allegory," I guess.

What a zoo! I mean, literally a zoo, a zoo for humans. See the Earth creatures in

their natural habitat! Hundreds of specimens in one glass enclosure, camped out on the blond hardwoodish flooring: giggly teens tramped up for their big shot, jitter-leg wired on sugar-coffee; callow gel-haired boyband dreamers (guy/girl ratio, 1:9 at least) either trying to look dangerous and sexy through their unlined faces, or sleeping; scared tubby karaoke princesses quietly warming up their tremulous whitebread R&B voices in corners; moms, dads, friends, entourages ... all penned in there, guarded by dozens of stern security drones and shepherded by clipboard ladies, surrounded by hundreds of rubberneckers on two levels, watching the animals.

They are all numbered, huge ID codes pinned to their chest for easy security verification; with all the discarded water bottles lying around, it almost looks like there's a marathon going on. And this is the start of their race, a race finish whose finish line is the the fabulous Juno Awards ... this is their chance at a shot at maybe getting a callback to try out for the finals that will decide who makes the cut for an opportunity to be made fun of on television.

Everybody is very nervous, and it's catching; WEM with its clangorous jet-takeoff noise levels is hell on the soul at the best of times, but with all this fretting and screaming and giggling and nail-bit-

ing going on, with all this hair product, cologne, fear-sweat, body spray and sex-hormone in the air, it's almost unbearable.

Money's being made, hand over fist—you can always tell when the mall's having a banner day because the Chinese in the food court is actually kind of fresh. For lunch I had a spring roll that couldn't have been more than two hours old.

It's not sitting too well, though ... this day's wearing on me, and it's even taking its toll on those for whom the mall is a natural habitat. Down in the holding pen, you can see the fatigue; tempers are getting short, perfectly made-up faces dropping into evil grimaces, black-rimmed eyes shooting daggers at those holding the colored tickets that symbolize progress; yellow for the first vetting, blue for making it through the day.

It's an ugly scene, yeah—how could it be otherwise?—but there's something oddly inspirational about it. I mean, what a great time for a young lady: eight to 10 hours of adrenaline rush/crash and peak emotional experiences, surrounded by hundreds of demographically similar hotties, punctuated by bouts of shopping, seasoned with dreams of superstardom, with a glimpse of Ben Mulroney thrown in for good measure ... all with no admission charge! —DARREN ZENKO / darren@vancouverweekly.com

But officer, it's for religious purposes!

ROSS MOROZ / ross@vancouverweekly.com

Members of a small Christian denomination should be allowed to import an otherwise illegal hallucinogen for ritual use, the US Supreme Court has ruled.

American members of the Brazil-based church, O Centro Espirita Beneficente Uniao do Vegetal in Santa Fe, New Mexico, receive communion by drinking hoasca, a tea made from Amazonian plants containing

NEWS DRUGS

dimethyltryptamine, a powerful hallucinogen that is considered a controlled substance under US drug law.

The dispute began after US customs officials seized a shipment of hoasca in May of 1999. The church cited the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, a 1993 law that compels the

government to make religious exceptions to federal laws where possible.

In their unanimous decision, handed down on Tuesday, Feb 21, the court ruled in favour of upholding the RFRA, noting that the government has allowed Native Americans to use peyote (which contains the banned substance mescaline) in their spiritual practice for over 35 years, and that the same exemption should apply to members of Uniao do Vegetal. ▼

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In the morning, will all this have been a dream, and will Canada hold men's hockey gold? No.

HOCKEY | IN THE BOX

DAVID YOUNG AND TB PLAYER
inthebox@vuwweekly.com

80000000000000000000 No medal for Canada in men's hockey. What else is there, really? The Oilers start playing again on Mar 1. Until then, we've got speed skating. And the other skating event. Figure skating, is it? TB and Dave still have Olympic fever. Team Canada men's hockey team? Olympic diarrhea.

ALMOST GOT THE TRIFECTA Well, I said that the Canadian women would win. I also said that Sweden would surprise everyone and do better than the third-ranked Finns. But I didn't foresee Finland taking out the US in the semi-finals. It's nice to see the playing field level a bit, too. It's now a three-and-a-half team race. TB

THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE FOR YOUNG BOBSLEDDERS? That would probably be fighting the urge to yell "WHEEEEEEEEE!" while sliding down the hill. Only then can you call yourself a bobsledder. DY

TB NEEDS SLEEP I've spent most of the last week trying to watch games at ungodly hours. I know it sounds un-Canadian, but there are some times of the day when I just can't get myself up to watch hockey. It'll be much simpler when the Olympics come to Vancouver in 2010. But for those ones, I'm gonna want tickets. TB

THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE FOR YOUNG CURLERS? That would probably be gaining the maturity and experience to yell "Hurry Hard" without blushing or giggling. Only then can you call yourself a curler. DY

CONSPIRACY THEORIES ABOUND Wow. Who would have thought that Switzer-

land could have beaten Canada in the preliminaries? I imagine the odds were huge. And, you know, if anybody had maybe, you know, bet on Switzerland, they would have made a killing ... uh, yeah, just kidding. TB

SO YOU WERE WATCHING FIGURE SKATING? I got caught using the S word while talking about figure skating Tuesday night. Yep, S for Sport—not A for Activity. Heather (lovely mother of Pepper—cutest baby in the world) caught me. I received a disappointing 20.0 for technical merit for slipping up like that, but my delivery was OK (fluid, good transitions, smooth delivery and I looked stunning) so I got a mediocre 26.0 for my program. I didn't cry when I heard the scores, though. I was strong. DY

O CANADA Here's the Canada/Russia game in a nutshell: 12:20 am (our time): Game about to start. Very nervous. Chewing my nails. 12:24 pm: Out of chewable fingernails. 12:34 pm: Game about to start. Kovalev looks psyched. Uh oh. 12:37 pm: Holy Crap. Fast-paced game. 12:48 pm: First Pronger penalty. Stop that, Prongs. 12:59 pm: Brodeur looks good. Yay. 1:01 pm: Kaspairitis hits Gagne hard. Looks clean—clean hits aren't his style. Gagne is hurt. Uh oh. 1:24 pm: Pat Quinn gets an Abusing the Official penalty. Make up your own joke. 1:44 pm: Richards sloppy penalty. 1:42 pm: Ovechkin scores. 1-0 Russia. On a power-play thanks to a dumb Bertuzzi penalty. Goat? 1:36 pm: Just over two minutes left. Close to a goal, but ref blew the whistle before the puck crossed the line. Uh Oh. 1:42 pm: Brodeur pulled, faceoff in Russia's end. Where's Smytty? He's been working his ass off. On the bench? Uh Oh. 1:43 pm: Pronger takes a questionable penalty. Under a minute left. 1:44 pm: 23 seconds left. Kovalev scores. Game is effectively over. No medal for Canada. Crap. DY



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Post-Secondary Education

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February 24-26, 2006

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Globe and Mail Columnist

Peter MacMenamin

Teachers' Union of Ireland

Edmonton, February 24th, 2006

7:30 PM Crowne Plaza Hotel

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CONFERENCE SESSIONS

Edmonton, February 25-26

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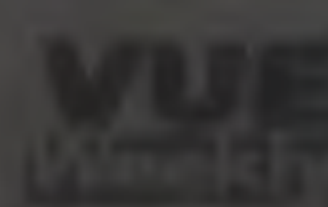
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And now, this week's edition of Gay People

QUEER

3 DOLLAR BILL

RICHARD BURNETT
threedollarbill@vuwweekly.com

If you think I've got a foul mouth, honey, you ain't read nuthin' yet. In fact, if you only read daily newspapers, you're likely not *au courant* with the recent smorgasbord of gay gossip. So, without further ado ...

Dead Or Alive singer and former British *Celebrity Big Brother* contestant Pete Burns announced on Britain's Channel 4 that he is engaged to boyfriend Michael Simpson. "We're so happy! Michael has never seen me as a photo, a video or a song—he saw me as the person I am," says Burns, whose ever-changing face makes famed NYC tranny Amanda Lepore (who recently stripped buck naked for three hilarious private gigs with a bunch of midgits at Montreal's Just For Laughs

Museum) look positively natural.

Burns didn't answer my multiple requests for interviews before he divorced his wife in 2004 (she and I had a mutual friend, but that, alas, was to no avail). But Burns pointed out on Channel 4 for the whole world to see that his and Michael's Vivienne Westwood-designed gold skull engagement rings "symbolize that under all this flesh we are bones and souls."

And don't forget the collagen, Peter ...

After telling *The National Enquirer* last month that he had unprotected sex with American Idol has-been Clay Aiken, former US Army Green Beret John Paulus generated a huge splash with his perfectly timed arrival in NYC, talking with the *New York Post's* Page Six and being escorted to Howard Stern's morning radio show by porn impresario Michael Lucas.

It looks like Lucas will now launch Paulus's porn career. In a press statement about Paulus's claim that Aiken allegedly pressured him not to use a condom during

sex, Lucas said, "I urge the community to support Mr Paulus as he joins me in the fight against unsafe, bareback sex."

Speaking of Aiken, when stand-up comic Kathy Griffin was chastised for outing Clay in a screamingly outrageous comedy routine at the Just For Laughs Festival back in 2003, Griffin told me, "Who is he fooling? Clay Aiken has broken his own gay ceiling!"

The mainstream media, meanwhile, are going ga-ga over country icon Willie Nelson's just-released cover of "Cowboys Are Frequently Secretly Fond of Each Other," a song written in 1981 by Texas-born singer-songwriter Ned Sublette and originally recorded in the 1980s by San Francisco queer punk band Pansy Division, long-time friends of this column.

Says Nelson somewhat disingenuously, "The song's been in the closet for 20 years. The timing's right for it to come out. I'm just opening the door."

The only country door that's open is the

one kicked open by *Brokeback Mountain*, whose soundtrack features Nelson's melancholy ballad "He Was a Friend of Mine." No wonder the timing's right. Incidentally, if you're a gay porn or country music fan, listen for porn star Jeff Stryker's 2003 single "Pop You in the Pooper," which he recorded with his band The Soggy-Bottom Boys. I'd like to hear Willie cover that song when he headlines his Canadian tour with The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band this spring ...

With the crossover success of *Brokeback*, it comes as no surprise to hear that Hollywood producer Andrew Lang has acquired the film rights to one of my all-time-favourite books, *The Dreyfus Affair* by New York author Peter Lefcourt. The novel chronicles the uproar over two Major League Baseball teammates who fall in love during a pennant race and get caught kissing in the dressing room of a Neiman Marcus department store. The characters are in their late 20s, but 42-

year-old Brad Pitt is now reportedly looking for a gay film role. I can picture Brad at bat right now ...

I don't expect Hollywood will cast an openly gay actor in *The Dreyfus Affair*. Neither does Sir Ian McKellan. Accepting a lifetime achievement award at the Berlin International Film Festival last week, McKellan said, "[It remains] very, very difficult for an American actor who wants a film career to be open about his sexuality, and even more difficult for a woman. The film industry is very old-fashioned in California."

Also, hearty congratulations from TDB headquarters to Rev Brent Hawkes, pastor of Toronto's Metropolitan Community Church, who performed the double same-sex weddings in 2001 that successfully kick-started the Ontario legal fight for gay marriage in Canada. Hawkes, a friend of this column, will marry his long-time partner John Sproule on the date of their 25th anniversary, March 7. ♥

A different kind of 'pro-life' movement

ROSS MOROZ / ross@vuwweekly.com

California doctors' ethical opposition to capital punishment has created a *de facto* moratorium on capital punishment in the state and has raised questions as to the constitutionality of the death penalty itself.

The state was forced to postpone

NEWS | DEATH PENALTY

the scheduled Feb 21 execution of convicted rapist and murderer Michael Morales after officials at San Quentin State Prison could not satisfy a recent judge's ruling demanding

that a licensed medical doctor supervise the procedure.

All of the physicians contacted by the prison refused to participate, so the execution had to be called off mere hours before Morales was supposed to be put to death.

In the past, lethal injections in California were performed by specially

trained prison staff.

In light of a petition by Morales's lawyers claiming that the pain caused by improperly administered lethal injections constituted cruel and unusual punishment, the court agreed that only a medical doctor should be administering lethal injections. ♥

Londoners to get the 'net everywhere

ROSS MOROZ / ross@vuwweekly.com

The municipal government of London—the big London—is embarking on an ambitious project that will make high-speed wireless Internet access, or WiFi, available across the entire city within the next six months.

A private Internet company which has been contracted to install WiFi hardware on telephone poles and lamp-posts, creating a seamless net-

NEWS | TECHNOLOGY

work of wireless hotspots which will blanket the city, allowing Londoners to access the Internet on the street.


Any existing internet service provider will be able to rent space on the network and sell access to consumers. The network will also incorporate a secure private channel for use by emergency services.

When completed, London's network will be the largest contiguous WiFi network in the world. Currently, San Francisco's MetroFi network, which covers 90 square kilometres, holds that distinction. ♥

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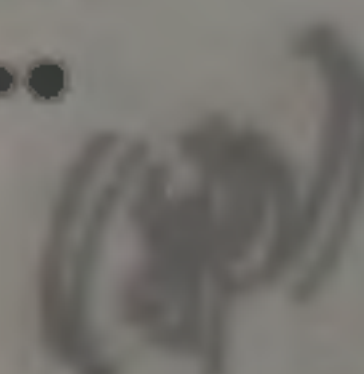


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Growing up *From Below*

AFTER 10 YEARS TOGETHER, EDMONTON'S OUR MERCURY PREPARE TO RELEASE FIRST LP ON WINNIPEG'S SMALLMAN RECORDS



PHOTO BY GALEIGH ANDERSON

TYSON KABAN / tyson@vuwweekly.com

At first glance, the members of Our Mercury don't seem to be the worn-out, jaded rockers you'd imagine them to be. Clean-cut and well-dressed as they sit here drinking tea and lattes, there's little evidence that the three founding members of the band—guitarist Ben Stevenson, drummer John Watson, and bassist Dan Laxer—have been dealing with the rigours of rock 'n' roll together since before they even entered high school.

Their story begins more than a decade ago, when the three childhood friends and pal Kenneth Graham formed a punk outfit called Misdemeanor. By the time the band had reached an average age of 14, they built up enough of a reputation on the local scene to be profiled by a writer from the *Edmonton Journal*, who dubbed them "The band that's too young to be bad."

At the time, they were all pretty offended by the insinuation: sure, they were a straight-edge punk band just out of elementary school, but Watson and Laxer had purple hair and they seriously considered themselves bad-ass, anti-establishment punk-rockers. At least the article helped to placate their skeptical parents, who apparently needed some convincing about their sons' extra-curricular activities.

"Early on, the straight-edge thing eased our parents' minds because we wanted to do some pretty outlandish things for kids our age, like to go on a tour with an older band, alone, in their van, to Grand Prairie," Watson says.

"And whenever something like that came up, we would have to hold these parent meetings at my house," Stevenson adds. "All the parents would come in and I was always the one in charge, presenting our plans and getting interrogated. We never really ran into that many problems with our parents, though. They did a pretty good job of trusting us and I guess, looking back, we probably were too young to be bad."

WHILE THEIR HEAVY INTEREST in music did distract the guys from indulging in at least some of the excesses of rock 'n' roll until they were of a socially-appropriate age (Watson got drunk for the first time in grade nine; Stevenson waited until he was 17), they still managed to cause their parents some grief with at least a couple incidences of typical teenage-boy behaviour.

"One time we made this piss-bomb in my basement. We all took turns whizzing in this wine bottle that we were going to take and whip at the floor of a convenience store or something and just yell some shit," Watson fondly recalls. "But my mom was wondering what we were doing and she found this wine bottle. ... She just went off the wall and screamed at Ben, because Ben always had to take the blame for anything we did. But I still don't know why she got that mad. To this day, we think maybe she tasted it or something."

"But we were pretty good kids," Laxer adds. "While everyone else was drinking and doing drugs, we were just throwing apples at cars and pissing in bottles. When you think about it, that's still pretty wholesome."

The boys finally decided to move on from their teenage, angst-filled punk origins in 2000, after Graham left Misdemeanor to play in a

PREVIEW

FRI, FEB 24 (8 PM)

OUR MERCURY

WITH WEDNESDAY NIGHT NERDS
NEW CITY, \$10

metal band. After overcoming the initial shock of Graham's departure, the three remaining members continued to play together, changing their name to Our Mercury in the process.

"It was pretty shocking at first because we'd been together for so long [in Misdemeanor] and we couldn't imagine the line-up being any different. We were one of those bands that if you replaced any of us, it wouldn't be the same," Watson says.

"There was no way we were going to break up the band after Ken left," Laxer continues. "It made us work harder because with only three of us, we couldn't cover up any shit when we played. There was no longer any room for error because if anyone fucked up, it would be so obvious. But it turned out to be the perfect opportunity for us to change and experiment and develop our own sound."

Right after the "new" band was formed, the guys headed out east for school, attempting, at the same time, to break into the Montreal music scene. They only lasted a year in La Belle Province, however, and arrived back in Edmonton broke but reenergized and more motivated than ever. Once home, they rented a house where they spent their time writing songs and jamming in the basement, which ultimately resulted in the release of Our Mercury's first disc, the EP *Your Medicine*, in 2003.

NOW THE BAND IS preparing to release their first full-length, *From Below*, which will also mark the debut of the band's newest permanent member, keyboardist/guitarist Eric Budd, who after years of being solicited by the band was finally convinced to join Our Mercury six months ago.

Produced by Nik Kozub, the album is a culmination of two and a half years of hard work—Laxer describes it as a "diverse mix of punk-rock, straight up rock 'n' roll, soul and Motown" with the some of best talent in Edmonton guesting on it.

Stevenson agrees and says it's the band's most refined record to date, showcasing a clear evolution of the band's sound. All of the original members of the band say that the new record marks a huge step forward for Our Mercury, and since they're only in their early 20s, they say there's at least another decade ahead of them and they plan on sticking it out together, both as bandmates and as friends, for as long as they can.

"If and when the time comes, it's going to be hard for us to pack it in," Stevenson says, "because I can see us at 60 years old still banging it out."

"We're going to be friends forever and I want to be playing with these guys forever," Laxer says.

And on the same page as his pals, Watson concludes, "This is one of the things that I'm most proud of that I've ever done in my life. I don't think we'll be stopping anytime soon."

AW. ♥



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Designers strut to support Theatre Network

SARAH CHAN / sarah@vancouverweekly.com

The Roxy Theatre has been a part of Edmonton's 124 Street landscape since it opened as an independent movie house in 1938. After being purchased by the Theatre Network in 1989 it has undergone numerous upgrades and facelifts in order to provide a worthy venue for local plays by Canadian playwrights, produced for Canadians.

On Mar 1, the Roxy will be home to the Theatre Network's fashion fundraiser, **Love Styles: Spring Fever**, an event that features many of the creative shops and people of the 124 Street community.

FASHION

WED, MAR 1 (7 PM)

LOVE STYLES: SPRING FEVER

ROXY THEATRE, \$20

Having produced their first fashion show for Valentines Day in 2005, Theatre Network is making the event a tradition with this year's sequel. They want to celebrate spring fashions in a literal sense, having choreographers work with the models to create little vignettes of all sorts of couples getting into that spring fever.

The designers featured are all local and all fabulous, specializing in their own brands. Nightshade Corsets will be providing all original hand-made corsets from their brand new store reflecting a gothic look whereas other designers such as Maggie Walt will be contributing their own trademark looks—in the latter case beautifully elegant creations.

The diversity of local designers continues with Gnuda, Losers Reject, Red Ribbon, Verde, Local 124, and a veteran to the cause, Gravity Pope.

Local 124 is such a new store on the street that it won't even be open until just before the fashion show.

Gnuda, however, has been in business for a few months now and will be featuring golden bohemian-gypsy looks.

Red Ribbon is also contributing a number of young and hip street level looks such as pieces from Losers Reject, a line created and propelled by Linda Ritter, both a stylist at Propaganda salon and a young local fashion designer.

Pieces from the style gurus at Verde will be reflecting the class and well-dressed spirit of the '20s through '40s. Creative directors Harvey Anderson and Idaho are excited to launch their first line of polished women's wear, which is so fresh, the pieces for the show aren't all complete yet.

In addition to talented local designers, the ambiance will be further enhanced with hair and makeup by Propaganda and sets by local musicians Andrea House and Chris Smith. All these various talents are coming together to promote the importance of local theatre and the future of Theatre Network.

As the Theatre Network's general manager David Cheoros, exclaims, "I think that people like our local musicians and visual artists and playwrights who are able to tell our own stories to represent the world we live in. If we don't nurture those local artists, we're left with nothing but other people's lives to tell."

Love Styles also promises to be a visual feast of a theatrical fashion show, with the various elements of design, makeup, hair and theatre all combined for a truly comprehensive look at style as art, and theatre as well dressed as ever. ♥

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The kind of Luck that finds
your husband dead beside you

BOOKS PRINT CULTURE

CHRISTOPHER WIEBE
printculture@vancouverweekly.com

While consumer marketers doggedly fill our world with products promising joy and fulfillment, so much of what we experience is shaped by loss and regret, things left unfinished.

I think it was an Old Testament prophet who wrote, "All flesh is grass, and all its beauty is like the flower of the field. The grass withers, the flower fades." Enter Joan Barfoot's witty and contemplative novel *Luck* (Knopf Canada)—a finalist for the 2005 Giller Prize—which begins with a devastating loss. Artist Nora Lawrence wakes to find her 46-year-old husband Phillip—a "bulky, brawny, boisterous" high-end furniture-maker—dead beside her. Over the next three days, we watch as Nora and her housekeeper, Sophie, and unstable live-in model Beth, fumble in the wreckage left by Phillip's absence, pondering their knotted pasts.

Nora—for whom "half the conversation of her life is suddenly gone"—grieves over the physical reminders of Phillip, obsessively sketching heaps of his shirts and ties.

Sophie, who'd been having an affair with the man for three months, is torn by her secret and her previous work in a death-filled refugee camp.

Max, Nora's elderly art dealer, provides a sort of emotional centre of gravity: "It would be foolish to tell you that you will recover, because in very many ways there is no recovery, only change."

For a novel about post-mortem suspension, *Luck* gets tremendous locomotion from stories within stories and anxious, often very funny, interior monologues. British reviewers refer to *Luck*'s "sardonic satire" and "black comedy" but, to my mind, much of this leans on the playful narrator. "What do other new widows do?" the narrator coyly asks. "They weep, they flail, they collapse. Or

some take cruises, or lovers."

In fact, the novel is often very tender and moving. Rather than fashion the three women's journey as an irony-dusted romp, Barfoot uses laughter to gently reveal the self-deception that limits each character's hard-won enlightenment.

Joan Barfoot will be reading at the Stanley Milner Library on Sunday, February 26, at 2 pm.

ON A SLIGHTLY DIFFERENT tack, Calgary poet Richard Harrison's taut and unflinching new collection, *Worthy of His Fall* (Wolsak and Wynn), explores mortality and loss through the lens of fatherhood and male mythologies.

Harrison has circled these themes in his four previous collections, like *Recovering the Naked Man* (1991), where he grappled with feminist readings of masculinity: "to be a man writing / ... to discover a body distanced / not by oppression but by privilege."

Worthy extends this dialogue between public and private, directing a strong current of outrage towards male violence and the politics that feeds off it. Poems move from Donald Rumsfeld's "high powered squint" to the pornographic nature of Iraq war footage to the six feet of excrement in a slave castle's holding cell.

But this violence is also very ordinary, even domestic. "In the privacy of his home, a man throws / a punch at his bedroom door ... He knows he has always cradled / this blinding rage. He's felt it flood out of the father he loves." And the poet finds shades of budding aggression as his young son plucks aspen leaves.

A unique and rich dimension of Harrison's writing has always been this profound sense of generational dialogue. "You will look for me, too," father says to son, "in the face growing old I told you once was like mine. / But do not find me."

The voice in Harrison's poems demonstrate a ruthless, transparency of thought we hide from even those we love. In this nakedness and vulnerability, Harrison finds a terrible, necessary beauty. ♥

He's a real Nowhere man

LETTING THE WIND GUIDE HIM, ROBERT BOYD'S UNLIKELY HERO IS A GONER

CAROLYN NIKODYM / carolyn@vancouverweekly.com

Randy Watson, the protagonist in Robert Boyd's first novel, *On the Road to Nowhere*, isn't the sharpest knife in the drawer. And he isn't especially likeable, either.

However, there is something in his manner, something in the stripped-down prose Boyd uses to tell Randy's story, that makes Randy a compelling character. He's that scrawny teenager you see on the bus, scowling at the world. Or that shy, station attendant who can't look at you straight in the eye. While he doesn't seem especially scary, there is something just a touch unnerving about him that makes you want to stare and wonder.

And as you follow the 16-year-old from his unhappy home in north interior BC down the titular road across the province and back into Vancouver, it's always hard to tell whether Randy is going to crash and burn or simply run. It does, after all, raise a question of him being off in a flame.

WHILE SOME OF the tales that inform *On the Road to Nowhere* were plucked from Boyd's own experiences, it's when he reaches past his tale and delves into the darker side of Randy that the novel really begins to sing.

When Randy ends up in the now closed Burnaby Oakalla Prison Farm it's not exactly surprising. What is, though, is how Boyd's use of language steps up a notch to illustrate the terror and hope of a prison that was regularly at three times its capacity.

"That prison was in the news quite frequently," Boyd explains. "It was constantly being plagued by overcrowding and there was a lot of notes

READING

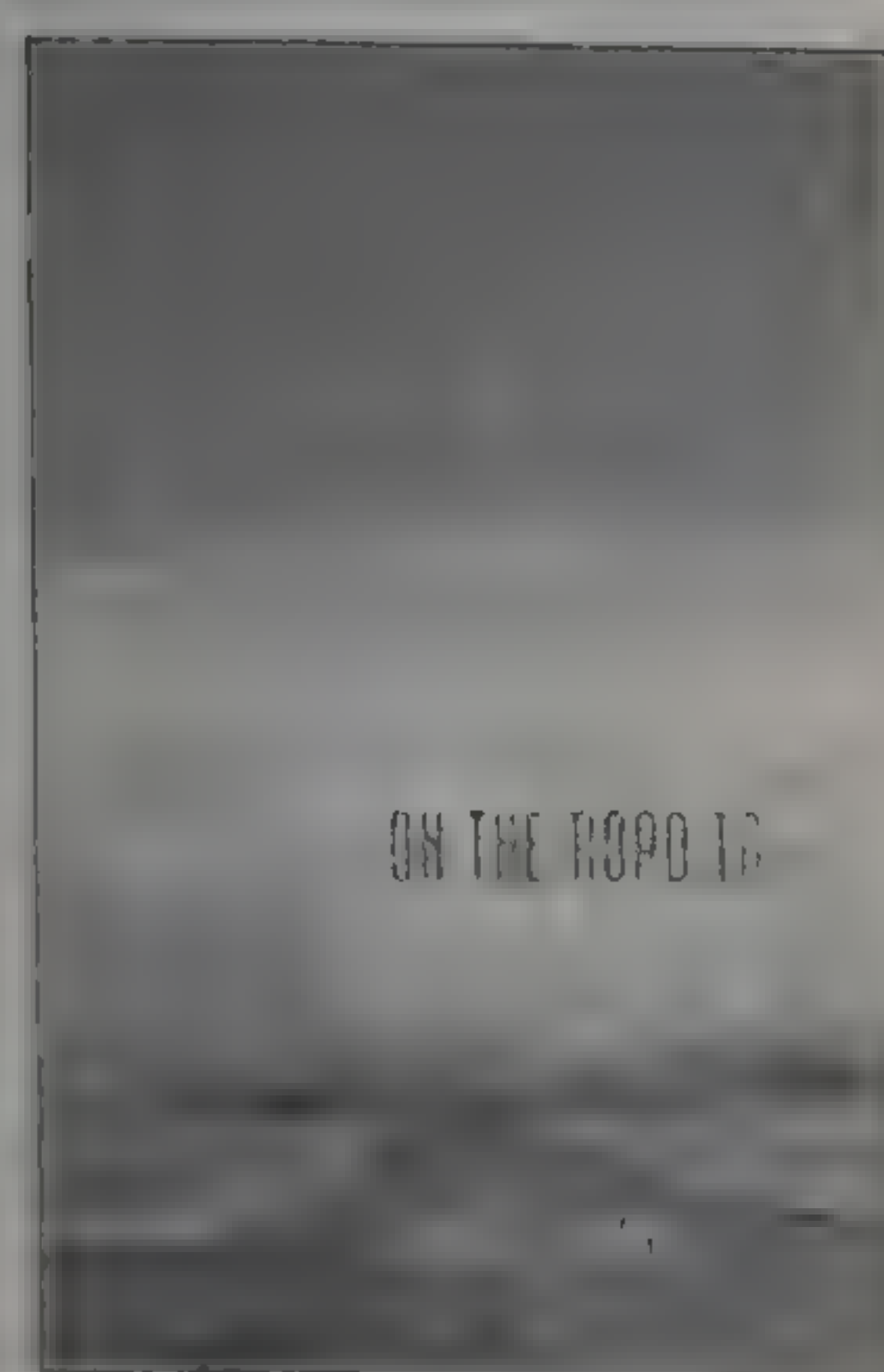
TUE, FEB 28
ROBERT BOYD
READING FROM *ON THE ROAD TO NOWHERE*
STANLEY A MILNER LIBRARY (NOON)
AUDREY'S BOOKS (7:30 PM)

there, and fairly easy to escape from. "It seemed like every time that I turned the news on," he continues, "something was happening there. They finally decided to close the place, which was long overdue."

While Boyd's take on prison life is his best at its best, it's not until Randy ends up there that the stories before this turn of events begin to truly resonate. It simply doesn't feel far-fetched for any young man like him to end up in the same position. And what starts out as a rambling trip-tych turns into a cautionary tale.

There are no proverbial heroes in *On the Road to Nowhere*, just a lot of average folk. Randy's own journey is one that many young men and women can relate to, he's somebody whom we've all met in our own travels.

The BC author, who'll be in Edmonton for a couple of readings



ON THE ROAD TO

on Feb 28, spent a number of years wandering Western Canada, and even lived in Alberta for over a decade, discovering what many Edmontonians already know.

The 11 years that I lived in Calgary, I got kind of caught up in all that Calgary-Edmonton rivalry," Boyd says. "Then I moved to Edmonton and I actually kind of liked it better." ♥

Kozub's in The Brown Family way

CAROLYN NIKODYM / carolyn@vancouverweekly.com

In local writer Mark Kozub's first novel, *The Brown Family*, you don't have to look very far to find the perfect candidate.

One of Edmonton's Ravine Poets, Kozub tells the story of a quirky Edmonton family using telling minutiae. And with it, he blurs the line between ordinary

READING

THU, MAR 2 (7:30 PM)
MARK KOZUB
READING FROM *THE BROWN FAMILY*
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VUEWEEKLY

DISH

With the sandwich, in the canteen, it was Col Mustard

CHRISTIE SCHULTZ / christie@vueweekly.com

Apparently, spring-like weather in February makes everyone want to go out for lunch. Who knew? My partner and I had to wait a few minutes at busy **Col Mustard's** for a table, but it gave us a chance to look around.

For those of you familiar with the old sandwich joint, which closed in early October to make way for its January relocation and transformation, table service is a new part of the sandwich experience.

More surprising are the spacious and funky new digs. Every wall is a different, bright colour, like the ones you'd have in your home if you were braver. The warm sunlight coming through lots of windows made the spring sunshine feel almost summery.

We ordered coffees (\$1.95) to get our midday caffeine kick. The chalkboard offered soups, including potato leek, minestrone, and a tomato basil and cream cheese (\$8.95) that I could not resist. My partner opted for a tabbouleh salad (\$4.75) to start.

If you go to the Colonel expecting Subway, you're bound to be confused and probably upset at the lack of combo deals. The fare is not fast food.

However, with somewhere around 50 sandwiches to choose from, you can expect your sandwich dreams to come true.

My partner fiercely craved a Montreal smoked meat sandwich and found it easily on the list, served on



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rye with mustard (\$6.95).

I was hoping for something fresh, with a new spin on favourite ingredients: I picked the pressed turkey sandwich with pesto, roasted peppers, and provolone (\$8.95).

WHEN IT ARRIVED, my tomato soup was creamy, mild and featured a few whole basil leaves. It was good, but I'd probably try one of the other soups next time. My partner's tabbouleh salad, a mix of parsley, bulgar wheat, tomato and

lemon, was surprisingly nutty in flavour. I'd sample this one again.

The smoked meat, moist, flavourful and piled high on rye, satisfied my partner's craving. The spicy mustard she chose—they also have regular and Dijon—was lively but did not overwhelm. Montreal may have made this sandwich famous, but it's right at home at Col Mustard's.

My pressed sandwich looked so good upon its arrival that I forgot to take the review's photo. Crispy, buttered sourdough held my sandwich together. While turkey and pesto are often close companions, the roasted red peppers made me giddy. In my mind, I saluted the Colonel for this one. The included pickle spears were good, mild and kosher—just the way a sandwich pickle should be.

Our coffees kept flowing while we ordered tarts for dessert. We had overheard a tart recommendation but not a flavour, so I ordered the lemon (\$1.95) and my partner ordered the custard (\$1.65). My lemon tart was tangy and not oversweet, well matched with its shortbread shell. The custard tart, though, was perfection. Have one. Now.

With coffee, appetizers, sandwiches and tarts, the bill came to \$32 before tax and tip. For a sandwich, it's not cheap. For a full-service, three-course lunchtime experience in a casual, trendy new place, the price is a steal.

Col Mustard's still offers a takeout counter for those in a rush. Both the sign on the door and the serving staff promised that evening service was coming soon. When that happens, a tapas-style menu will be available from 5 pm onwards.

I'm tempted to work my way through the whole menu. If I start now, I could be through by summer. I might, however, shave a day off my experience by skipping the sardines. ▽



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As Seinfeld's dad says, you can make a meal of the appetizers (on Whyte)

SARAH CHAN / sarah@vancouverweekly.com

Whyte Avenue is Edmonton's SoHo. Our trendiest neighbourhood teems with independent shops and eateries, interspersed with a few tolerable chains.

It's a place to party, shop, see and be seen; most of all (at least before 9 pm), it's a street where people eat. In the proximity of just two blocks, a couple can savour four completely unique dining experiences.

One cold Friday eve, the bundled bustled along the ave in search of suitable supping. My fiancé and I were on a whirlwind tour to investigate appetizers and bevies. Our only possible first choice was to step out of the cold and into Whyte's bustling Greek cornerstone, **Yianni's Taverna**.

A waitress seated us almost immediately at a small table near the open kitchen. After a long week, my first order of business was getting a drink. The retsina (\$6) was a hearty white wine with notes of grapefruit and rosemary, the dry initial punch leaving lingering citrus aromas on the back of the tongue.

Retsina complimented our prawns Youvetsti (\$11.95) perfectly. The succulent tiger prawns were baked in a tomato ouzo sauce, topped generously with toasted feta, and arrived in a tiny dish resembling a mini-wok. That sauce was a show-stopper, marrying the taste of shellfish with sweet ouzo.

We followed the prawns with keftedes (\$9.50) and tarama dip (\$4.95). The rich, creamy coral-tinted mousse dip resembled a giant marshmallow made of smoked carp roe, lemon and oil. It made a strange combination with crunchy-crust keftedes. The traditionally prepared meatballs were doused liberally from the lemon wedge, then dipped in tzatziki.

BUOYED BY THE ENERGY at Yianni's, we walked a few doors down to the chic **Sapphire Lounge**.

The move from homey Greek getaway to icy, sleek minimalism was a shock. The long, narrow-yet-cavernous space was lined on one wall with bar-height stools at rows of tiny tables perched in front of a stunning water wall. Cocktails are Sapphire's claim to fame, but their tapas menu has substance.

I went lighter this time, with a Lights Out martini (\$7.71) of Soho (lychee liqueur), Chambord, Stolichnaya vodka, cranberry and pineapple juices. My fiancé opted for Hpnotiq, gin and Blue Curacao in the Sapphire Original (\$7.71).

Two long-stemmed martini glasses arrived, one pink and one blue. Mine was a delicious fruity concoction, reminiscent of a liquor-infused smoothie, with its deep raspberry hues and frothy top. The Sapphire Original was much stiffer but the gin was artfully proportioned against the sweet blue liqueurs.

Our tapas arrived on simple white, square plates. We chose the smoked

LOTS AND LOTS OF APPETIZERS

SUN - THU UNTIL 10 PM, FRI - SAT UNTIL 11 PM
YIANNI'S TAVERNA
10444 - 82 AVENUE / 433 6768

MON - WED UNTIL 1 AM, THU - SAT UNTIL 2 AM
SAPPHIRE LOUNGE
10416 - 82 AVENUE / 437 0231

MON - THU UNTIL 10 PM, FRI - SAT UNTIL 11 PM,
SUN UNTIL 5 PM
FLAVOURS MODERN BISTRO
10354 - 82 AVENUE / 439 9684

SUN - THU UNTIL 11 PM, FRI - SAT UNTIL MIDNIGHT
DEATH BY CHOCOLATE
8123 - 104 STREET / 435 6669

steak quesadilla (\$6) and jerk chicken skewers (\$6) and were happy for the heat. The duo of dainty jerk skewers packed a zesty citrus punch, but we were left wanting more.

Our bulgogi-like quesadilla was melted with cheese, onions and mushrooms, then pressed in a sun-dried tomato flatbread. An aioli dip provided just the cooling effect required for the chili-hot quesadilla; I fanned my mouth, also wanting more. The heat left me thirsty but we pressed on to our next destination.

OUR NEXT CULTURAL SHIFT was into a classy old-world bistro on the next block. Stepping into **Flavours Modern Bistro** across from the Princess Theatre was like being transported to another time, another place. A wall of exposed brick, a cozy fireplace near the front, a beautiful dark-stained bar and waiters in long black aprons fuelled the fantasy.

Reaching capacity, we could only go light, though the menu tempted me. The daily specials promised roasted corn and wild boar bacon chowder (\$5), which I paired with a Parisian Orangina (\$2.75)

My fiancé chose the salad Nicoise (\$12), which came topped with a mid-rare ahi tuna steak. A perfect balsamic vinaigrette was drizzled across organic greens, a halved hard-boiled egg and olives aplenty

He wasn't jealous of my deep, hearty blend of whole corn in chowder. Bacon, carrots and the corn lent a wonderful taste and intriguing texture. We both devoured the salad, but I strategically saved much of my soup for lunch the next day

FINALLY, OUR DESIRE for the sweet led us across the street to **Death by Chocolate**. The newly-converted coffee shop looked much the same as it used to, with some extra signage, two large coolers and a plasma TV

Flipping through the leathery binder of dessert selections, I resented having to pick just one. We needed something cool and refreshing, however, so we went with the Caribbean Delight (\$7.95) with plain coffee (\$1.95) for him and a white chocolate mocha (\$2.75) for me

The latter was highly recommended by the menu and, though rich and frothy, I found a lump of powder at the bottom. The plain ol' cup of joe was more suited to our breezy dessert

A delicious, Bernard Callebaut dark chocolate palm tree was planted in two scoops of berry and French vanilla ice cream. After devouring palm tree and ice cream, we dipped pieces of fresh kiwi, strawberry, pineapple, cantaloupe and mandarin oranges into the little cup of melted chocolate for a mini-fondue

From Mykonos to a metropolitan lounge, to a Viennese coffee shop and a sweet pseudo-Caribbean treat, I didn't leave a two-block area

After \$92 plus tax and tip, we were stuffed. I carried lunch for tomorrow and we were ready to hit the clubs or the shows. ▽

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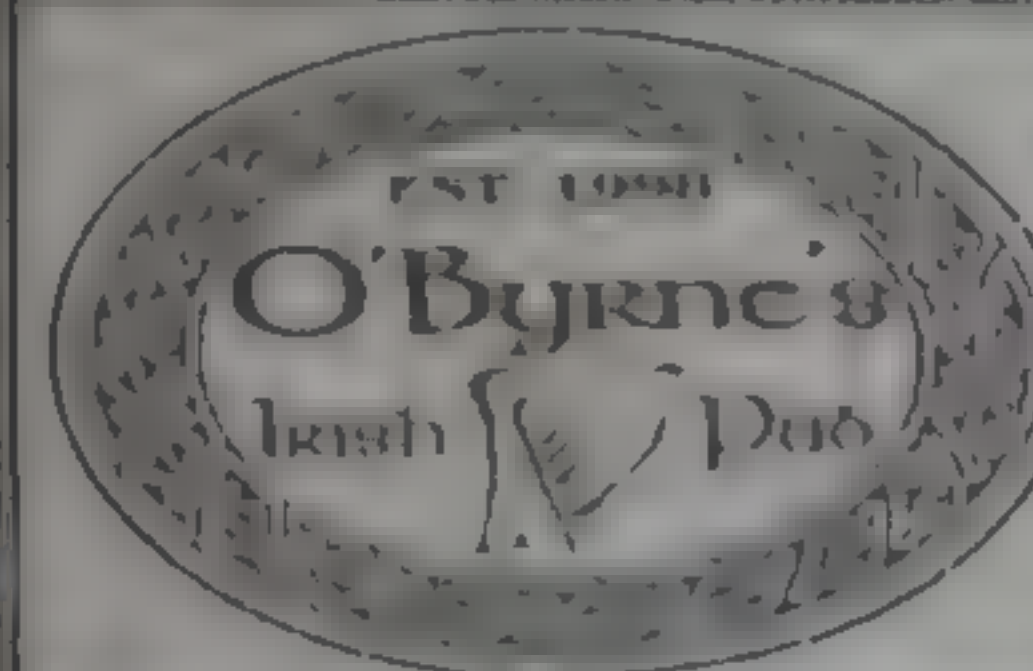
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Dropping (snow) science

WHISTLER AVALANCHE GUIDES COMBINE TURNS AND TEACHING IN FREE COURSE

JEREMY DERKSEN / jeremy@vuweekly.com

Ever look up from the top of a chairlift and gaze down at a bowl covered in sweet champagne powder, only to find it roped off and picketed with avalanche danger signs?

The temptation to poach a fresh line on the other side of the ropes is familiar to most pow-hounds, especially on days when crowds have churned everything into chowder.

But all it takes is one skier trespassing in avalanche territory to trigger a slide. This doesn't mean we should fear snow, but certainly a measure of respect for this sheer natural force is healthy.

While visiting Whistler, I discovered the hill is now offering a free one-day **Avalanche Awareness Course**. You still need your lift ticket, naturally, but the course provides just the right amount of theory, hands-on practice and riding to make for a fun day of education on the hill.

Taking the course doesn't mean you give up a day of riding; the volunteer guides are hungry to ride and they find ways to get in enough teaching and turning to satisfy both interests. About snow is to get out on it, feel it under foot, see how it reacts to pressure and experience the factors—wind, convex slopes, temperature and snow consistency, to name a few—that

SNOW | AVALANCHES

OUR INTIMATE LITTLE GROUP of four consisted of one woman, two instructors, Chris and Dennis, and me. We did the introductions and within moments we were sharing stories of our riding exploits and raving about the record-setting snowfall in January Preliminaries out of the way, we set off from the bottom of the Blackcomb daylodge to plumb the snowy depths of the alpine.

As we ogled the untracked snow below the Seventh Heaven chair, I was glad our instructors shared the urge to bomb trails as well as talk shop. After some great lines in the trees, it was down to business.

Chris took us over some basics: checking morning temperatures, weather forecasts, and avalanche reports by phone or online (the Canadian Avalanche Association website is an industry-standard reference).

Extremely cold weather can play havoc with snow layers, and it's important to know what's underneath the soft stuff. For example, knowing there was surface hoar on a slope a

few days earlier, we knew that several centimetres of hoar create a layer of

shifting, icy granules underneath subsequent snow layers. Hoar is surprisingly easy to spot with the eye—it's the shimmery crystals of ice that form on a snow surface when the temperatures drop and the resulting dryness pulls moisture to the surface, sort of like dew.

If you live in a cold, snowy climate, hoar is likely so familiar that you barely notice it. But see it in the context of an avalanche course and you'll get a sense of instant recognition.

To show us, Dennis cut out a snow pit and we did compression tests on the snow to see what amount of force was required to loosen a block from a pillar of snow carved into the pit. After we loosened it, Chris put a magnifying lens over the surface hoar we found a metre down so we could examine its shape and volatility.

WITHOUT LECTURING, Chris and Dennis imparted to us the serious nature of snow science and the importance of respecting snow's variable, sometimes volatile nature.

CAA danger ratings are a good guide to consider before heading for the backcountry, and trained guides or experienced travelling partners are the best way to ensure safety.

Our guides also showed us how a simple "stomp" test can be a good practical indicator in the back country or in-bounds avalanche terrain at a hill. Using your ski or board, you simply



ply push down on the snow, first lightly and then with increasing pressure. It's the kind of test you do only if you're certain there's no danger, but even when you're confident it never hurts to do a quick check.

Though the course is not quite enough to ready you for the back country, Whistler's guides are knowledgeable and friendly, and learning

about snow helps to better understand skiing conditions. It also instilled me with respect for the avalanche crews who constantly study and assess snow safety at ski hills; it's a challenging, intricate job.

The snow may be softer on the other side of the rope fence, but as I learned, there's a good reason the rope is there. ▽

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Your kids in the 2022 Olympics? Start now!

SKI TIPS
skitips@vuweekly.com

When is it time to introduce your little ones to the great sport of skiing? Usually it's the case that the sooner you do, the better.

Most kids are ready for the sport at the age of three or four, as they have the innate ability to find a natural stance and balance point without much prompting at that age. I'll bet most of us who started early can't even remember the learning process—we just strapped 'em on and went!

The most important thing when skiing with kids is to keep it fun. Don't force

them out on really cold days, keep the sessions short, and remember that kids do well with other kids.

With platter lifts and beginner terrain parks, kids today can easily learn while having a blast.

It's also important to remember that unless you're a good skier, it's better to put your kids in lessons. Group lessons with other kids will tend to push them a little more, since when they see the other rugrats doing it, they'll want to do it too.

Sometimes timid children can be a little standoffish when they start a lesson. Generally, these kids will do better if you take them out with you a few times before you put them in a group lesson.

Getting off to a positive start is important, as are praise and pep talks. Ultimately, playing while learning is key. ▽

(The other) Winter Games at the starting blocks

JEREMY DERKSEN / jeremy@vuwweekly.com

The kevlar fences and run marking for the **Alberta Winter Games'** moguls and aerials competitions, running Feb 23 to 26, are set and ready to go at Marmot Basin.

The games feature athletes ages 12 to 17 competing in outdoor winter sports as well as indoor sporting events.

Marmot Basin hosts the alpine racing—slalom, giant slalom and dual GS—as well as the freestyle events. More events will be happening back in Jasper, where athletes

MONS | COMPETITION

will compete in figure skating and speed skating, as well as fencing and squash.

Other towns in the area are also hosting events. Men's hockey is in Edson, women's in Hinton, and biathlon and cross-country at locations around Yellowhead County.

If you're in the area, go and check out some of our up and coming athletes. ▽

Five Olympic skiers, four sets of skis

SKIING | FALL LINES

HART GOLBECK
falllines@vuwweekly.com

GOLDEN GIRL IS COMING HOME EARLY

Jennifer Heil, the freestyle skier who grabbed Canada's first gold medal in Torino, is coming home early. At first she had planned to stick around, cheer on Canada and attend the closing ceremonies, but one week of goodwill has tired her out.

She probably had a good chance of being the flag bearer at the closing ceremonies—at least until Cindy Klassen took three medals in skating.

Spruce Grove, get ready to party, because Heil should be hitting town even as this story hits the newsstands.

MAN OF MYSTERY WINS MOGULS GOLD

Last weekend, Dale Begg-Smith, once a Canadian but now an Australian, won the Olympic mogul competition. All we know is that he's a millionaire, drives a Lamborghini and skis really well.

Apparently Begg-Smith's money comes from an internet ad-tracking business that he doesn't want to name or discuss, but it's funded his last six years of training.

He claims he hasn't had a falling out with Canada's olympic committee, but when you're rich and you know how to ski, you probably aren't too crazy about following the regulations of an established winter sporting nation.

Competition to make the Australian team probably wasn't too difficult.

SKIER DOESN'T LIKE AUTHORITY

After a disappointing finish in the Super-G race, French skier Pierre-Emmanuel Dalcin stopped and gave the finger to the judges.

Caught on international TV and in front of thousands, he was fined the maximum penalty of US\$3 800 for making an

obscene gesture.

Dalcin was upset because in the morning, he was leading the pack after 17 racers had completed, but race officials stopped the race because of bad weather.

By late afternoon the weather improved and all racers competed again. Dalcin was unable to repeat his morning performance and as a result sent a message to the judges.

PAINFUL SUPER-G FOR CANADA'S GUAY

One of our premier alpine skiers really had a tough day on the slopes. First-time Olympian Erik Guay had never skied the course at Sestriere—training was cancelled because of heavy snow, so he had to go in blind.

Team doctors had to shoot his knee up with painkillers in the morning, then repeat the process after the race was delayed for several hours.

Like a crazy Canuck, Guay screamed down the hill, only to be knocked off the podium by one-tenth of a second.

Canada's alpine spokesperson commented that it was an unbelievable effort but "unfortunately it's all about medals." That may be true as far as the standings go, but we're still proud of him.

NEW SPORT: SKI JUMPING SANS SKIS

Viewers watching Olympic coverage over the weekend witnessed a ski jumper taking an exceptionally strange air.

As Canadian aerialist Jeff Bean launched off the ramp during training, his skis left his feet. The ski-less Bean continued to perform a version of the stunt he was practicing, twisting and somersaulting in the air before hitting the ground boots- and butt-first.

Cameras were setting up their angles and happened to film it. The jump won't impact the standings, and Bean walked away uninjured but a little sore. He is in the running, however, for the Understatement of the Games Award, telling *Ski Press*, "it's not normal to see a jumper in the air without his skis." ▽

LOOK TO

SNOWZONE

—VUEWEEKLY

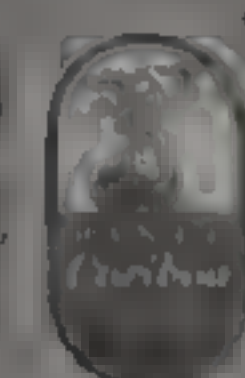
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The EasyRider Condition Report

LOCAL

Rabbit Hill - 2 cm new snow, 60 cm base, terrain park open and all runs 100 % open
Snow Valley - 5 cm new snow, 60 cm base, x country and all runs 100 % open

ALBERTA

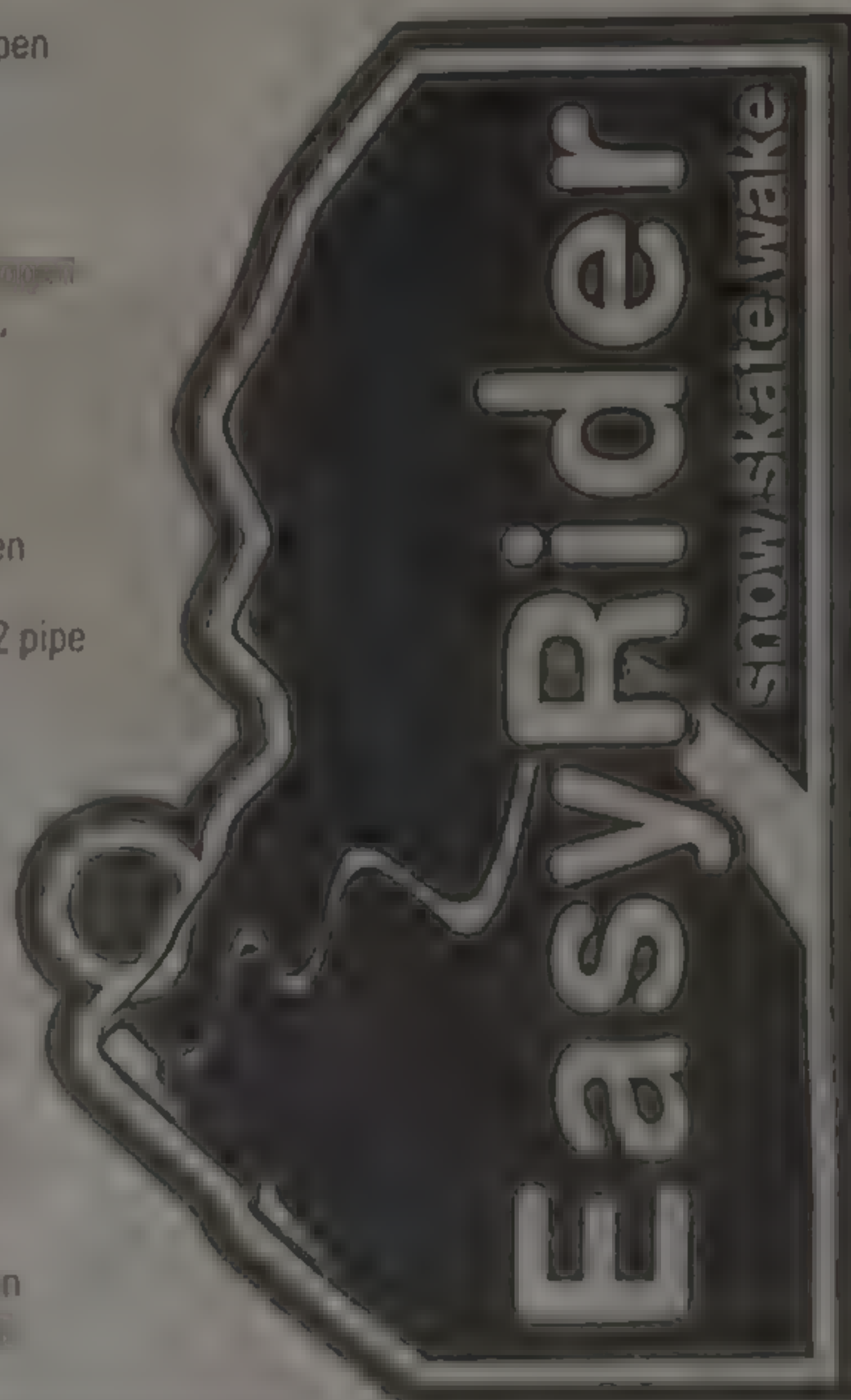
Castle Mtn - 2 cm new snow, 70 - 204 cm base, 61/62 runs open
Can. Olympic Park - 2 cm new snow, 100 cm base, all runs 100 % open
Fortress - no new snow, 78 - 118 cm base, backside double chair now open
Lake Louise - 10 cm new snow, 143 - 187 cm base, all lifts and 112/113 runs open
Marmot Basin - 1 cm new snow, 78 cm base, all main lifts and 83/84 runs open
Mt. Norquay - 4 cm new snow, 89 cm base, all lifts and 27/28 runs open
Nakiska - 4 cm new snow, 32-75 cm base, 5/6 lifts and terrain and rail parks open
Pass Powderkeg - 2 cm new snow, 82 cm base, all lifts, 11/14 runs w/ terrain park open
Sunshine - 17 cm new snow, 170 cm base all lifts and 103/107 runs open
Tawatinaw - 2 cm new snow, all lifts and runs open

B.C.

Apex - 3 cm new snow
Big White - 3 cm new snow, 261 cm base, all lifts and 117/119 runs open
Fairmont - no new snow, all runs open
Fernie - 6 cm new snow, 337 cm base, all lifts and runs open
Kicking Horse - 7 cm new base, 152 cm base, 105/106 runs open
Kimberley - trace new snow, 117 cm base, 6/7 lifts and all runs open
Mt. Whistler - no new snow, 340 cm base, 44/45 lifts and 107/108 runs open
Panorama - 1 cm new snow, 75-110 cm, all lifts, trails, and bowls open, snowboard park and 1/2 pipe now open
Powder King - no new snow, 248 cm base
Powder Springs - 10 cm new snow, 100 cm base
Red Mtn - no new snow, 247 cm base, all lifts and runs open
Silver Star - new snow 1/2 cm, 205 cm base, all lifts and most runs open
Sun Peaks - no new snow, 160 cm base, all lifts and runs open
Whistler/ Blackcomb - no new snow, 234 cm base, 22/23 lifts open, 1/2 pipe at Whistler closed
Whitewater - 17 cm new snow, 294 cm base, 3 lifts open

USA

Big Mtn - 13 cm new snow, 120-298 cm base, 8 lifts and 98 runs now open
Big Sky - 2.5 cm new snow, 215 cm base, all lifts and runs open
Crystal Mtn - no new snow, 63 cm base, 7 lifts and all runs open
49 Degrees - no new snow, 380 cm base at top, all runs open
Great Divide Ski Area - 12.5 cm new snow, 62.5-137 cm base, 80 runs open
Lookout Pass - 5 cm new snow, 370 cm base, all runs open
Schweitzer Mtn - no new snow, 205 cm base, 6/8 lifts and all runs open



At Panorama, it's ski-o-rama

COLIN CATHREA / colin@vuwweekly.com

The world's most perfect alarm clock—the low rumbling of Snow Cats grooming the base area—awakens me.

I roll over and gaze at her. Big and friendly, she looks beautiful in the morning light. She's plumper than the last time I saw her. As the light brightens her features, she looks more and more inviting. No, this isn't porn: this is Panorama.

Once again, the slightly longer drive all the way up to Panorama Mountain Village was well worth it. I was bloody glad to get off the QE2 on a crazy Friday and take the shortcut towards Banff. With my daughter and her boyfriend happily tuned into their iPods, we made our way into BC.

Unfolding the mountain map, I was taken aback by the size of the village. After passing several hotels and condos, we finally found our rooms. Once again we were pleasantly surprised, as the room was fully equipped. With a grocery store just below us, we could even cut costs if we felt so

I woke up Saturday morning and strolled out onto the deck. Holy shit! It was 21 degrees below and I was in my skivvies. Waking up the kids, I gave them the weather report: sunny, no wind. They rolled over and groaned, but quickly joined me for breakfast without prodding.

We popped into the rental shop to grab a snowboard for my daughter, where we were handled quickly, efficiently, and courteously.

I decided to head out after a good layering of protection, including a face-warmer. In the three-person line-up at the Mile 1 Quad, I noticed how

AREA PANORAMA

people don't talk when it's cold—we just bury our faces deep in our jackets and stare.

A very pleasant surprise was soon to greet us, though. As we ascended the mountain, the temperature followed us. By the top of the first quad it was 10 degrees below, and the inversion continued on our way up the Champagne Express.

Finally, after cresting the Summit Quad at the very top, it was 5C, and the view was more than spectacular. It stopped almost every one of us.

WITH THE MORNING LIGHT cascading over the mountains, I spotted Mount Assiniboine off in the distance. It seems strange that Panorama is a two-hour drive from Banff, yet you can still easily see the alpine highlands that hold Sunshine Village from this high up.

Finally, it was time for some of the wide-open cruisers that keep me coming back to Panorama. After a difficult time getting down Outer Limits, I traversed over to Picture Perfect and Skyline. As I sped down the empty slopes the temperature continued to drop and by the time I was halfway down Show Off I had to stop and apply some warm hands to my cheeks, which were frozen solid. Turns out that -20C with a windchill leads to frostbite. On my next run down Rollercoaster I started doing those "lean-way-over" carvers, using much more hip and

CONTINUES ON NEXT PAGE

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CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

knee angulation to cut through the cold, hardened corduroy.

ON MY WAY UP to the summit again, the thumping of the first helicopters of the day filled the valley. I slowed down a bit up top in the warm inversion to soak in some rays and take advantage of the well-written area information that's dispersed throughout the resort.

At the top of every lift, a full account of run conditions details snow and grooming, even breaking the run down into segments, so it's not unusual to read: "A little rough on the edges halfway down, but the bottom half is excellent."

The description of the Extreme Dream Zone described varied conditions on each path down. After some consideration, I picked Orca, a double black diamond, because it was rated "excellent" with "soft powder still found just into the trees." It was tough sledding, but well worth the plunge.

I kept migrating back to the summit

and, after another cappuccino, I decided to go look for the kids, who were snowboarding somewhere below. With no sign of them in the room or in the terrain park, I headed back up the Mile 1 and went looking for an old favourite called Schober's Dream, a ridiculously long run.

I was off alone and kept skiing to the left, and before long I looked up and I realized I didn't know where I was. There's something to be said about a ski area where you can get lost within area boundaries. I figured out I was over in the Sun Bowl and skiing through what appeared to be a Christmas tree lot. This area must have been logged years ago and replanted. It's a great little personal playground.

Give this resort a try. It's good all season long as a result of tremendous snowmaking. They make big stockpiles and move it around to ensure coverage right into the spring.

This is a ski-to-your-door operation, and accommodations run the gamut from three- to five-star digs. Just call the resort to find out about the ski-and-stay packages they offer. ▼

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You can teach art, but can art teach you?

CHAD HUCULAK / chad@vuweekly.com

Ask any post-secondary student in Alberta if she thinks tuition is expensive and she will laugh in your face, then ask for a bit of spare change.

Education in artistic fields—design, music, or writing, for example—is an especially uncertain investment; art is notorious for its gleaming brass ring of fame and fortune that leaves thousands upon thousands at the wayside, penniless and in despair.

So why throw money at a degree that does not guarantee a job while those you idolize brag about their accomplishments with their lack of formal training? Well, sometimes there are still a few things to learn.

Greg Freer, 23, an industrial designer who recently became the first Canadian to win Germany's prestigious Red Dot design award, is of two minds about the benefits his University of Alberta Bachelor of Arts diploma has given him.

"The education I received was beneficial in some ways," says Freer. "It gave me a sense of direction as to how to focus my skills. The assignments I was given really gave me a goal to focus on, wherein if I'd had to wing it on my own I wouldn't have gotten any feedback on what I needed to work on."

But the tuition for the four-year program wasn't what Freer calls a "smart investment." He recalls, "I was fortunate enough to have a scholarship to pay for my schooling. Had it not been there, I probably would have been a lot more upset with my degree."



ILLUSTRATION BY PARASHA RACHINSKY

LOCAL FOLK MUSICIAN Krista Hartman, who released her debut CD last year, dodged the education system for as long as she could.

"Music theory is something I've always loathed," recalls Hartman. "For me, it has always taken the glory out of being a songwriter. When I

was a kid, I used to ditch my piano teacher midway through her lessons, I'd run up the local toboggan hill and wait for my mom to pick me up. They'd be screaming at me to come down, and I'd yell: 'Not until she takes the white-out off of the music notes.'"

After teaching ESL around the

NEWS EDUCATION

world, Hartman changed her tune, pursuing a Bachelor of Arts, majoring in English, in addition to continuing her musical pursuit in her free time.

"Formal education is really important in this day and age," Hartman says now. "In my opinion, one goes to school to find out how little they actually know. Many musicians think going to school is the easy way out—selling out. I've come to realize they are wrong."

"I'm also learning a lot more than I would have working for minimum wage at some trucker's breakfast diner, and I think I've become more balanced and realistic with regard to my ambitions as a songwriter."

With music, the allure of DIY is still strong; seldom does music education get mentioned in the history of music legends, while the band of the moment will frequently tell the press how only their self-motivation got them to where they are today.

Cameron Ambrose is one of those do-it-yourselfers. His band, Exit303, put out an album that Ambrose decided to self-produce despite the chance to record with a big-name producer.

Ambrose makes it clear that his education came solely in the form of music/technical magazines and a great deal of experience. He skipped formal training as a producer because of the cost and because, he says, there's a "lack of credible recording schools in the region."

"It made for a longer road as I had to discover techniques for myself instead of being shown proper practices from the beginning," Ambrose said. "That being said, it made the journey very rewarding and interesting. I've also been able to use the money saved in education costs to improve the quality of my studio."

Now the owner of his own music studio, Ambrose credits hard-work and self discovery that allows him not to chase work—it now finds him.

CHERYL KAYE IS a local published author of three novels and numerous other projects who credits her accomplishments to her relatively modest education.

"Most of my education, when it comes to writing, has been gleaned from high-school language arts programs and a few writing courses," says Kaye, who took a writing correspondence course through International Correspondence Schools after her husband was posted to the small town of Chatham, NB, where she found few other opportunities.

With a sense of confidence from obtaining her ICS certificate, Kaye found advancement in her field along with many open prospects.

"In many ways, I am self-taught," says Kaye. "I have studied my industry by analyzing bestsellers to see what makes them work. I have read articles on writing, invested in numerous reference books, and contacted people who are 'doing it.' There is no real internship for fiction writers. You learn by experience, by making mistakes and finding ways to fix them." ▀

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compete in a hot food competition," he explains. "where they produce a three-course meal for four within one hour."

The second competition is in cold food, where a hot dish is prepared but served cold to demonstrate its artistic appeal.

"NAIT students attend international competitions every couple of years, either the one in Singapore or one in Germany," Brownlee says. NAIT usually earns medals at these competitions.

For diploma students, both lab work and final exams happen at Ernest's. This haven for fine dining on the NAIT campus was named after the father of the benefactors for the Hokanson Centre for Culinary Arts.

Ernest's is the crown jewel of the culinary arts program, and the four-star restaurant is an ideal spot to sample creations from budding chefs in surroundings of understated elegance.

Culinary arts students have other opportunities to get involved, as well. Le Club Culinaire is a student-managed group with a couple of faculty

advisors. They coordinate student events and keep the program plugged into the needs of the community while pursuing opportunities to develop their skills.

Last Thanksgiving, NAIT students fed over 2 000 people at the Boyle Street Co-op. They regularly provide dinners to the Edmonton Women's Shelter.

FOR THOSE LESS INTERESTED in the arts and more interested in forging towards a career as soon as possible, NAIT also offers a cook apprenticeship program. Six months of class time is broken into manageable eight-week segments, and a further 42 full-time weeks on the job earns your papers.

At the end of the apprenticeship, the well-rounded student has learned cutting and classification of various meats, menu costing and portion control, as well as the creation of pastries and desserts common to the industry. Training in wines, spirits and beers was added in 1999. They can also

supervise, train and coach apprentices themselves.

"In the program, we demo the skills required and then they work on their own projects," says Brownlee.

When students have a chance to exercise their creativity, the results can impress both teacher and student. After the program, students work all over Europe, on cruise ships or in their home town.

At about \$3 500 a year, including tuition and supplies, a culinary arts education teaches students to cut through the veils of secrecy that surround this art, this craft.

The NAIT program has a wide appeal, attracting local dilettantes and serious students from around the world, including the Philippines, Australia and the United States. The culinary team's medal-winning performances at competitions only raise the School's profile.

Each gushing review of Ernest's Fine Dining heralds it as one of Edmonton's great finds. They must be doing something right. ▽

Your first lesson in food

BRAISE (BRAYZ) A cooking method where meat or vegetables are first browned in butter and/or oil, then cooked in a covered pot in a small amount of cooking liquid at low heat for a long period of time. This slow cooking process both tenderizes the food by breaking down fibres and creates a full-flavored dish.

DEMI-GLACE (DEHM-EE GLAHS) A rich brown sauce made from reduced veal and beef stock that is used to make classic sauces. This is the stuff that gives those sauces you are served at fancy

restaurants that velvety texture and sheen.

ENDIVE Often confused with its cousin, chicory, there are three main varieties of this leaf vegetable: Belgian endive, curly endive and escarole. They're used mainly in salads, but can also be briefly cooked and eaten as a vegetable or in soups.

VINAIGRETTE A cold sauce made from a mixture of vinegar, oil, pepper, salt and flavourings used to dress green salads. ▽

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Vikings can teach us all—not just kids—about bullies

PREVIEW

FRI FEB 24 (7 PM)

NAMI NAMERSSON: THE VIKING WHO LIKED TO NAME THINGS

WRITTEN BY BRYAN CARROLL

DIRECTED BY JARED MATSUNAGA-TURNBULL

STARRING NAMI NAMERSSON, JARED MATSUNAGA-TURNBULL

CONCRETE THEATRE, THE CITADEL

TICKETS: \$45-\$80

BRYAN CARROLL / bryan@vueweekly.com

The world can be a scary place sometimes and people can be mean, but Concrete Theatre's *Nami Namersson: The Viking Who Liked to Name Things* tries to show kids and adults that respect is important.

"It's important to ensure that your kid isn't a bully and that they're not being bullied," explains assistant director Jared Matsunaga-Turnbull. "but it's not just for kids, it also applies to the workplace."

In fact, *Nami Namersson*—in which a young girl named Nami Namersson, a uniform co-opts for himself all the best ideas a stump, a slug and a singer can conceive—could apply to the whole world. The story is about the impact of Europeans to the New World with the arrival of Columbus and the predatory American foreign policy.

While the story is about the world, that connections to the world at large do exist within the story, it's not necessarily the essence.

It's looking at colonialism in all forms for kids that's bullying and

THE PLAYHAT

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While it's rather light fare, *Guys and Dolls* does have flair

MUSICAL'S OLD-TIMEY CONVICTIONS ASIDE, CITADEL PRODUCTION HAS FUN IN ALL THE RIGHT PLACES

CAROLYN N. KODYM / carolyn@vueweekly.com

From the first of the opening number, the dandies flirt with shape ly chorus girls, the opening choreography of *Guys and Dolls* truly sets the stage for the excitement of late 1940s New York City.

Like many, I survived a high school production of the musical, so I was not surprised by the excitement and trepidation that I watched the performers fill the stage during the opening number.

But aside from a few early-show missteps, the Citadel's production revved up the atmosphere, and Brian Perchaluk's Broadway Avenue set dazzled with a sense of the Big Apple.

As the show that epitomizes Broadway glitz, *Guys and Dolls* tells the lighthearted stories of bookie Nathan Detroit (Gordon Tanner) and showgirl Miss Adelaide's (Jennifer Lyon) 14-year engagement and the unlikely pairing of compulsive gambler Sky Masterson (John Devorski).

unashamedly kitschy musical theatre. None of the characters are too deep here, and some of the senti



ments are pretty outdated.

In "Marry the Man Today," for example, Adelaide and Sarah sing "And if he ever tries to stray from you / Have a pot roast / Have a headache / Have a baby / Have two!"

That said, *Guys and Dolls* is also a hell of a lot of fun to watch, if only because it's so hopelessly romantic.

NOT LEADING MEN

performances. Tanner's Nathan Detroit is the perfectly likeable

REVIEW

FRI FEB 24

GUYS AND DOLLS

DIRECTED BY ROBB PATERSON

WRITTEN BY DAMON RUNYON, FRANK LOESSER,

JO SWERLING, ABE BURROWS

STARRING GORDON TANNER, MAIRI BABB,

JOHN DEVORSKI, JENNIFER LYON

SHOCTOR THEATRE, THE CITADEL, \$45-\$80

sleazeball that the audience can't help but root for, even as the commitment-phobic gambling man puts off marriage for yet another day.

And Devorski's Sky Masterson is as suave as can be. Although he's no Marlon Brando (who portrayed the role in the 1956 screen version), Devorski has the understated strut and deep vocals needed to turn the prim Sarah Brown into mush.

Of course, by the show's end when the cast flows out under the bright lights of the Broadway Avenue set, everybody's hearts are right there with Sarah's, and the audience is left not hopeless, but hopefully romantic. ♥

Was the west won with toy guns? In *Johnny Guilar: The Musical*, maybe

SONYA SOLO / sonya@vueweekly.com

For *Johnny Guilar: The Musical*, a young boy named Ryan twirling a plastic gun and singing about the glory of the west in western duds.

It looked like the actors were really getting into the spirit of things, which is exactly what Ryan intended when using these recent MacEwan grads as a great vehicle for these songs. Ryan says "The piece has a reference to the piece, a young, joyful view of musicals. It slightly mocks the genre."

Based on the 1953 movie starring John C. Reilly, the musical

PREVIEW

FRI FEB 24 (7 PM)

JOHNNY GUILAR

DIRECTED BY TIA RYAN

WRITTEN BY NICHOLAS VON HONSTEDT

STARRING KEMBA CHURCHILL, SON MANNING

STARRING KEMBA CHURCHILL, SON MANNING

STARRING KEMBA CHURCHILL, SON MANNING

STARRING KEMBA CHURCHILL, SON MANNING

lighthearted approach to the story of conflict between two tough ladies in a small New Mexico town.

Although there is a feminist angle to the story, it's not Ryan's main focus.

"The most important thing is, it's not a message, it's a story. I don't think it has any serious message."

STILL, THAT DOESN'T MEAN the show is nothing but pure, unfiltered fluff. The songs reflect a great deal of character depth and make some insightful observations about the way women are viewed.

At the same time, the musical is also an intertextual reflection on the

"The movie was written kind of as a reaction to the McCarthy years," Ryan comments. "One of the lead characters, Emma, presents herself as a puntanical and upright person, but in actual fact she tries to destroy anybody that gets in her way. So the Emma aspect of the story reflects the McCarthy Hearings."

"Other than that," Ryan continues, "it's just more about 1950s movies

and musicals, a comment on the original movie—which is just steeped in Freudian imagery and psychological undercurrents."

Ryan also wants to maintain that emotional intensity of the original in his own production. Having the audience sit on either side of the stage in an almost saloon-like setting will definitely help break the fourth wall. However, Ryan doesn't want to let the drama overwhelm the comedic aspects of the show either.

"The biggest challenge right now though, is finding holsters and guns and a roulette wheel," Ryan continues. "We have a line on some, but in the spirit of the piece, if we ended up using plastic guns it wouldn't be that bad." ♥

Velvet Shock saves best for last and uses well its talented cast

DAVID BERRY / david@vuwweekly.com

Stewart Lemoine is the type of artist who, even when he's off, is on. It's an admirable talent to have, and it's displayed rather adroitly in the remounting of his 1997 play *The Velvet Shock*.

Shock is a back-heavy bit of a play, paced a little oddly—the intermission drifts in on a fairly unremarkable scene, and most of the insidious build-up to the titular shock (can't tell you about it, of course) takes place in the last scene—with dialogue that's suitably snappy but not quite as sharp as Lemoine at his best.

While these disadvantages would stick out in most plays, Lemoine and his talented cast manage to turn them into a double play that's both lightly humorous and chillingly emotional when it needs to be.

It sets itself up in Salzburg, as soprano diva Margherita D'Inviemo

REVUE

TO SAT, MAR 4

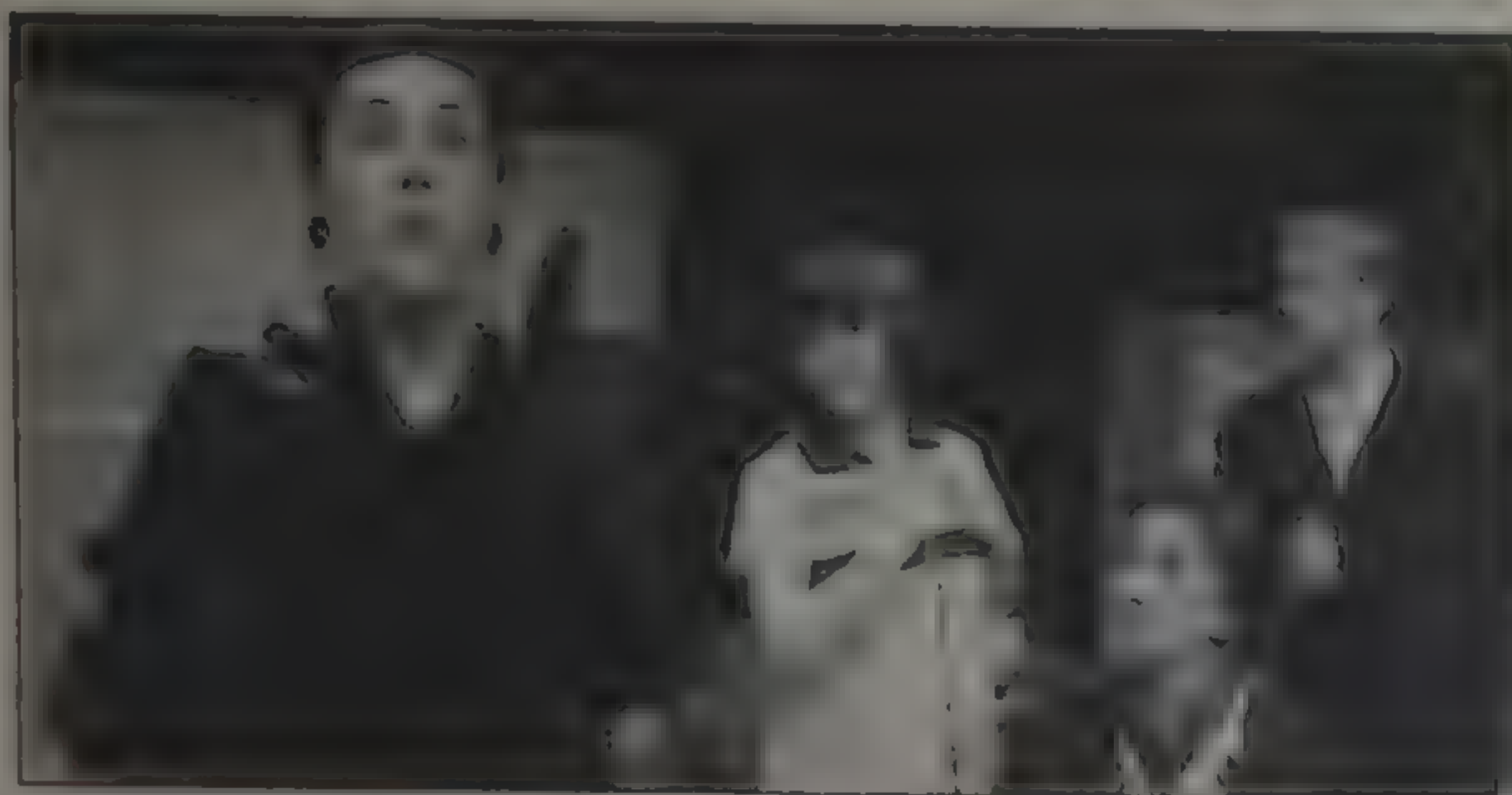
THE VELVET SHOCK

WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY STEWART LEMOINE
STARRING SHERI SOMERVILLE, CLARICE ECKFORD,
MATT ALDEN, CORALIE CAIRNS
VARSCONA THEATRE, \$18

(Sheri Somerville) and her niece Vicki (Clarice Eckford) prepare for a sold-out concert.

When an old school friend of Margherita's (Coralie Cairns, who hits her mark perfectly) shows up with a surprise involving a local waiter (Matt Alden), all their lives are changed, though not in the ways each was expecting.

AS WITH MOST LEMOINE PLAYS, a fair deal of the emotional attachment involves the natural charm of the cast, and he's picked a good quartet for his



Clarice Eckford has a spitfire nervous energy that seems a bit overbearing at first, but she settles in to the role of chatty comic relief fairly easily.

Matt Alden manages to seduce with an affable schoolboy charm through most of the play, but still finds enough inner turmoil to get

downright scary when things turn

IT MIGHT BE EASY to overlook Somerville's performance for her singing, but as the anchor of the play, she too manages a nice transition, hers from detached diva to a woman with remarkable cunning, with a

razor tongue throughout

The show would probably hit its mark better if it weren't for the script, which is sadly the weak point. There's a fairly large lag in the middle, where it feels as though the play hovers between airy and sinister, not quite sure which way it wants to go. And instead of transitioning smoothly, it essentially just feels a bit empty, a gulf where a bridge should be.

As mentioned, Lemoine *et al* do find their footing when they need it. But one can't help but feel the strong ending would have been considerably more powerful with more of a natural build.

The production still manages to pull it off, though, which speaks to the overall talent involved here. The set-up may be a bit jarring, but the cast manages to put a chill up the spine by the end anyway, which is what a shock is all about, isn't it? ▽

Poster show helps aging scenesters remember the glory days of punk

DARREN ZENKO / darren@vuwweekly.com

Big posters are a key part of a city's feel, the cornerstone of the look of a scene.

As public art, your average photocopied flyer for some two-practice garage band's first neighbourhood pub gig is seen by more people than any 20 gallery paintings put together—at least before it's buried by another layer of staplegunned foolscap or stripped off by souvenir-hunting fans.

And for a decade beginning in 1987, the streetside look of Edmonton punk marketing was defined in large part by the work of illustrator Bob Prodor.

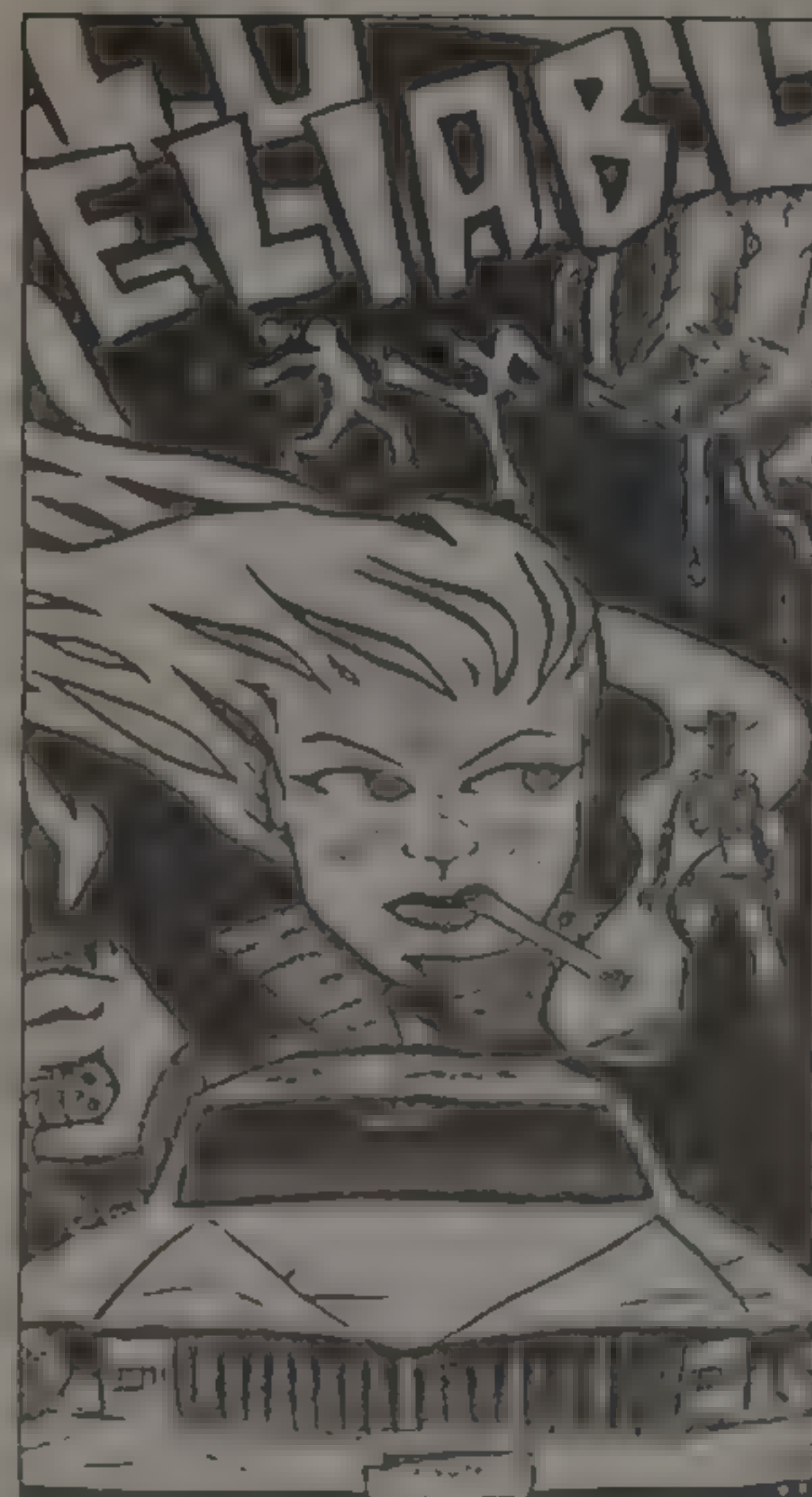
It all started in the halls of that perennial punk-rock hotbed, Victoria Composite.

"I was in a drama class or something with [then-fledgling gig promoter] Todd Flintstone," Prodor recalls, "and I was like 'Oh, you promote shows? Let me do the poster!'"

Dating from his first posters for Flintstone-hustled gigs at the Multi-Purpose Rumpus Room, through CJSR gigs and shows at the Ambassador, Prodor's body of work—a couple hundred or so (posters of which will be on display at Avenue Skatepark's Bad Art for Bad People show on Feb 24)—is a record of our punk past, a memory capsule of defunct acts and venues.

"When we got into it, the old guys thought that we were the young punks," Prodor says. "Now when I go to shows, people are, like, 'Whoa, you've been around forever!' and I'm, like, 'Well not really; I didn't see Dead Kennedys in 1984, you know?' I guess when you get older, you hit a point where you're just like 'Whoa! I've been going to gigs for 20 years ...!'"

INSPIRED BY OLDER-SCHOOL locals like Bart and southern California punk



PREVIEW

FRI, FEB 24

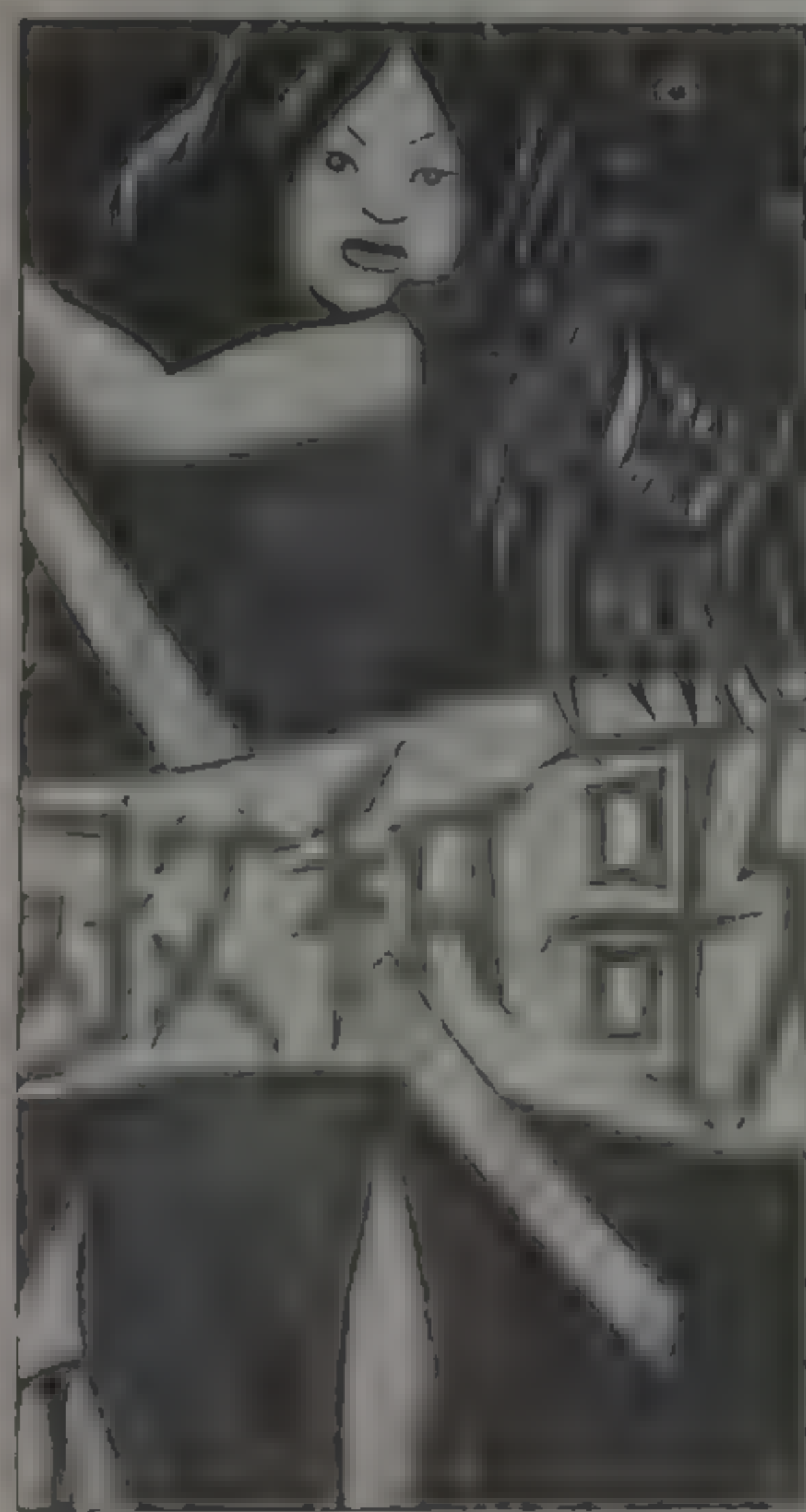
BAD ART FOR BAD PEOPLE

BY KEN WOOD
MUSIC FROM BUDD PLUGGSDOT & TEX ASS MIKEY,
THE SUBATOMICS, FAT GUY, THE LITTLE COATS
AVENUE SKATEPARK

illustrators like Kozik (whom he laments as having gone "too pop"), Prodor just wanted to make some attractive posters.

"I knew what I didn't like ... especially when computers came into play," he says. "Then all the posters became just a picture from the band's press kit, with type around it. They're totally non-collectible."

"What I loved," Prodor continues, "what I liked to see, was, like, a No Rebate poster with a drawing by Bart on it, and it was, like, 'This is an awe-



some drawing; the poster looks wicked. It's black on lime green ... I want to put that on my wall!' I just contributed to the black-and-white punk-rock look. It's a classic. That's the chosen form of expression, the chosen medium."

Now a professionally trained illustrator and comics creator—his two-year-old *Wine, Women and Song* miniseries will soon have its fourth issue—Prodor only gets around to doing four or five posters a year.

"It's ironic," he says, "I went to school, and after I went to school, that's when I stopped doing posters. Now I've got graphic design skills and typographic skills, and I'm not using them. I didn't have them when I was doing hundreds of posters, and now that I have them I'm not using them. I guess it's the punk-rock philosophy." ▽

Last goodbyes for Monty

CAROLYN NIKODYM / carolyn@vuwweekly.com

The Edmonton theatre community will have an opportunity to celebrate the life of one of its luminaries on Sun, Feb 26.

Albert "Monty" Montgomery died Feb 13 at the age of 87. He was known for decades of behind-the-scenes contributions to many Edmonton theatres. Montgomery began his lighting

OBITUARY MEMORIAL

career when Victoria Composite High School's theatre was brand new. In 2000, he received the Elizabeth Stirling Lifetime Achievement Award.

A memorial in Vic Comp's theatre will be held at 2 pm Sunday. ▽



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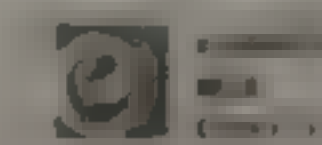
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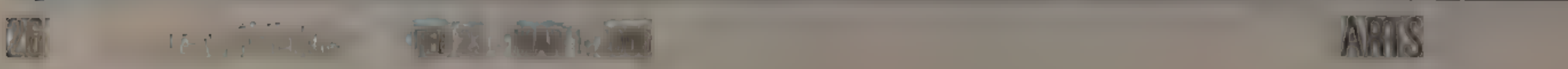


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Family
Reunion? Nah.
Better never
to see this
family again

COMEDY

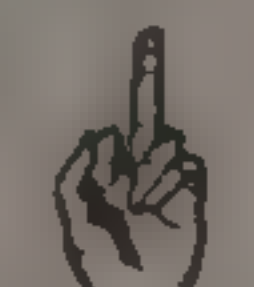
OPENS FRI, FEB 24

**MADEA'S FAMILY
REUNION**WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY TYLER PERRY
STARRING PERRY, ROCHELLE AYLES,
BLAIR UNDERWOOD

JOSEF BRAUN / josef@vuweekly.com

Writer-director-producer-composer-star Tyler Perry's *Madea's Family Reunion* is a film as over-stuffed with conflicting ambitions as Perry's role is over-hyphenated.

Few opening credit sequences feature the same name so frequently and few films suffer from this particular mania to be all things at once to its designated audience, a hungry niche market that's presumably black, middle-class, Christian and protective of old-school family values.



THIS SUCKS

To say that Perry (who also wrote and starred in *Diary of a Mad Black Woman*) tries to balance an absurd palate of ethics and entertainment is an understatement.

On one hand, a large part of the film's melodramatic side is concerned with getting a gorgeous, demure and clearly damaged (not to mention vacuous) young woman away from her rich but physically abusive fiancé.

YET IN THE BROADLY comic sections, Perry gets into drag to play the titular, tough-love mother figure, an almost funny and definitely frightening big momma who thinks nothing of beating the shit out of any rascally kids who cross her path.

The film has too many mixed yet heavy-handed messages. Beating your spouse: bad! Beating small children: good!

We're to pat ourselves on the back for enjoying Perry's warm fuzzies and (overwritten) tearful monologues about overcoming adversity, but then turn a blind eye to his hypocritical crudities.

One could write a review solely addressing the film's arch acting, soapy clichés, bloated running time and stupefying tackiness, but I think its best to concentrate on meeting Perry on his own base terms: his shameless moralizing not only rings false, but has resigned itself to preaching strictly to the converted. ▼

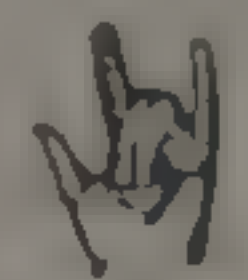
She's a coal-miner's documentarian

BARBARA KOPPLE'S 1976 *HARLAN COUNTY, USA* REVEALS THE DIGNITY OF THE MINER

JOSEF BRAUN / josef@vuweekly.com

Given the current popularity and proliferation of documentaries, the time is ripe to look back to *Harlan County, USA*

Barbara Kopple's devastating 1976 Oscar-winner profiles a gruelling 18-month Kentucky miner's strike in which the stakes involved are not only the acquisition of a union, but also the abhorrent working and living conditions



THIS ROCKS

In the plainest visual language, *Harlan County* reveals the shameful state the miners were forced to live in and the powerful, violent, fear-mongering and largely vigilante-founded anti-union apparatus they had to contend with. But the film also uncovers the strength, dignity and rich culture (especially musical) fostered within the mining community

O & A

FRI - MON, FEB 24 - 27 (9 PM)

HARLAN COUNTY, USADIRECTED BY BARBARA KOPPLE
METRO CINEMA, \$8

Kopple's partisan stance is crucial in enabling *Harlan County* to fully immerse the viewer into the world of its subjects, the individuals who, in the heat of their struggle to literally survive, remain firmly lodged in the film's heart

THIRTY YEARS AFTER her triumphant debut, Kopple seems busier than ever. Currently, she's in the midst of making a documentary about the Dixie Chicks and the tumultuous years they've had following their criticisms of President Bush

When we spoke, I asked her about her recent prolificism and the themes

linking her latest projects. She shrugged off any imposing notion of an elaborate personal vision guiding her work, preferring to emphasize a simple, abiding belief in the value of documentary filmmaking as an adventurous artform, a method of political activism and a way of life

Not unlike *Harlan County*, the Dixie Chicks film is "just a wonderful story of change, how sometimes you just have to get out there, take a risk and do something you believe in," Kopple explains

VUE WEEKLY: Tell me how *Harlan County* started.

BARBARA KOPPLE: It started with this movement called Miners for Democracy. A few years before, Jock Yablonsky and his wife and daughter were murdered because Yablonsky ran against the then-president of the

United Mine Workers, this guy named Tony Boyle.

The miners were so outraged that rank and file miners decided to run against Boyle for their union. So I wanted to see what that was all about

In *Harlan County*, they were trying to unionize, so I went there to see if they'd really see it through and help Eastern Kentucky get their union which of course they did. That journey became the film's focus

VW: Did you have any idea you'd wind up spending years on this?

BK: Of course not. You never know with documentaries. You have to simply move with your instinct and have a great curiosity about people

KOPPLE: MONTY BRINTON

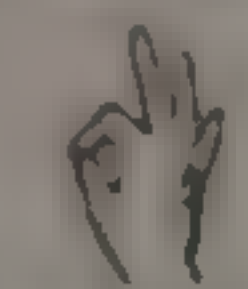
Russian dancing, yes; squat-kicking, no

OLD-TIMEY SOVIET BALLET COMPANIES' FIERCE COMPETITION SHOWS IT JUST TAKES TWO TO TANGO

BRIAN GIBSON / brian@vuweekly.com

A two-hour ballet documentary sounds like a film just for fans of arabesques, glissades, and pirouettes

But *Ballets Russes*, which focuses on the grand point-off between two historic dance companies in the '30s and '40s, may offer an enjoyable night out even for those who aren't



THIS ROCKS

entranced by buff bodies in tutus and tights performing an exquisite, self-torturing pantomime on stage

(Plus this way you don't have to get dressed to go to the ballet. You can regularly afford ballet tickets.)

While *Ballets Russes* does not,

DOCUMENTARY

FRI - MON, FEB 24 - 27 (7 PM)

BALLETS RUSSE

WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY DANIEL GELLER.

DANIEL GELLER

NARRATED BY MARIAN SELDES

FEATURING NATALIA DUKAKOVA

TATIANA PRANDIN, IRINA BARONOVA

METRO CINEMA, \$8

Unfortunately, show enough extended dance footage, Dan Geller and Dayna Goldfine offer a charming tribute to the two Ballets Russe companies, bookended by scenes from the reunion of both companies' members in New Orleans in 2000

The curtain rises in 1929, when the

great Sergei Diaghilev had died and with him, it was thought, had gone his storied Ballets Russe company. Two years later, though, Wasily de Basil co-founded Ballets Russes de Monte Carlo, with Diaghilev regular George Balanchine as choreographer

Three teenage girls—"baby ballerinas"—from the diasporas of post-Revolution Russian refugees in Europe were made the company's stars: Tania Riabouchinska, Tamara Toumanova, and Irina Baronova

Soon, Balanchine was pushed out and replaced by Leonide Massine, who offered new ballets by the fistful each year. Massine introduced the

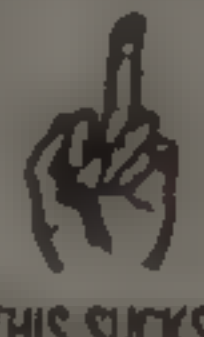


GELLER: MONTY BRINTON

Not even a talented cast redeems lame *Doogal*

TRENT WILKIE / trent@vuwweekly.com

What do the new animated film *Doogal* and *Fever Pitch* have in common? They both would have been better movies if Jimmy Fallon were born without a tongue.



ANIMATION

OPENS FRID, FEB 24
DOOGAL

DIRECTED BY BUTCH HARTMAN
WRITTEN BY SERGE BARNET, WALLY GIBBS
VOICES BY JIMMY FALLON, JON STEWART,
JIMMY KIMMEL

sea of lava, the script comes across as lazy. Dylan even goes so far as to mimic Gollum with Fallon's half-dead voice droning on and on.

The film goes obviously off the mark when Dylan makes a joke about the Wu Tang Clan that left the theatre silent. None of the four-year-olds in the audience seemed to know who Ol' Dirty Bastard was.

The only real highlights of the film, aside from the stunning animated landscapes and vistas, come from a flatulent moose voiced by Kevin Smith. Although the part is extremely limited, you can never go wrong with fart jokes.

Brilliant flatulence aside though, the film's tired dialogue seriously saps it of any fun. Fallon's mindless referencing and Stewart's boring bad guy, combined with Goldberg's monotonous droning, made the movie seem like it was trying way too hard.

In the end, despite *Doogal's* impressive roster of talent, it just doesn't have any of the magic its characters are looking for. ▽

Jackson's King Kong remake only perpetuates thinly veiled racism of 1933 original

MOVIES

HERESY!

BRIAN GIBSON
brian@vuwweekly.com

In *Heresy!*, Vue Weekly invites its film critics either to champion a film that everyone else regards as trash, or to trash a film that everyone else regards as a masterpiece.

Peter Jackson's blockbusting, skyscraping behemoth *King Kong* may never recoup its costs at the box office, so I suppose this jab will seem like a pinprick to the big fall guy. But let me toss my critical banana peel under him anyway.

Jackson initially offers some wry Hollywood satire and self-parody through Jack Black's character, the fictional roguish, bombastic director, Carl Denham.

But soon, out roars the Denham in Jackson himself, as he indulges in a relentless visual orgy.

The sweetly understated melodramatic tone and temperament of the film's first hour, in richly evoked Depression-era New York and on the Pacific voyage, is quickly swamped by a two-hour CGI show, breathless action, and a head-pounding battery of thrills! chills! spectacle!

It's not so much the slips in plot that I object to in this *Gorilla of the Myths*. It's the overdone sequences that seem to

have crash-landed into the film from somewhere light years beyond the nearest solar system of credibility—like the one where a herd of house-high dinosaurs stampedes down a gully and only crushes a few of the fleeing humans underfoot.

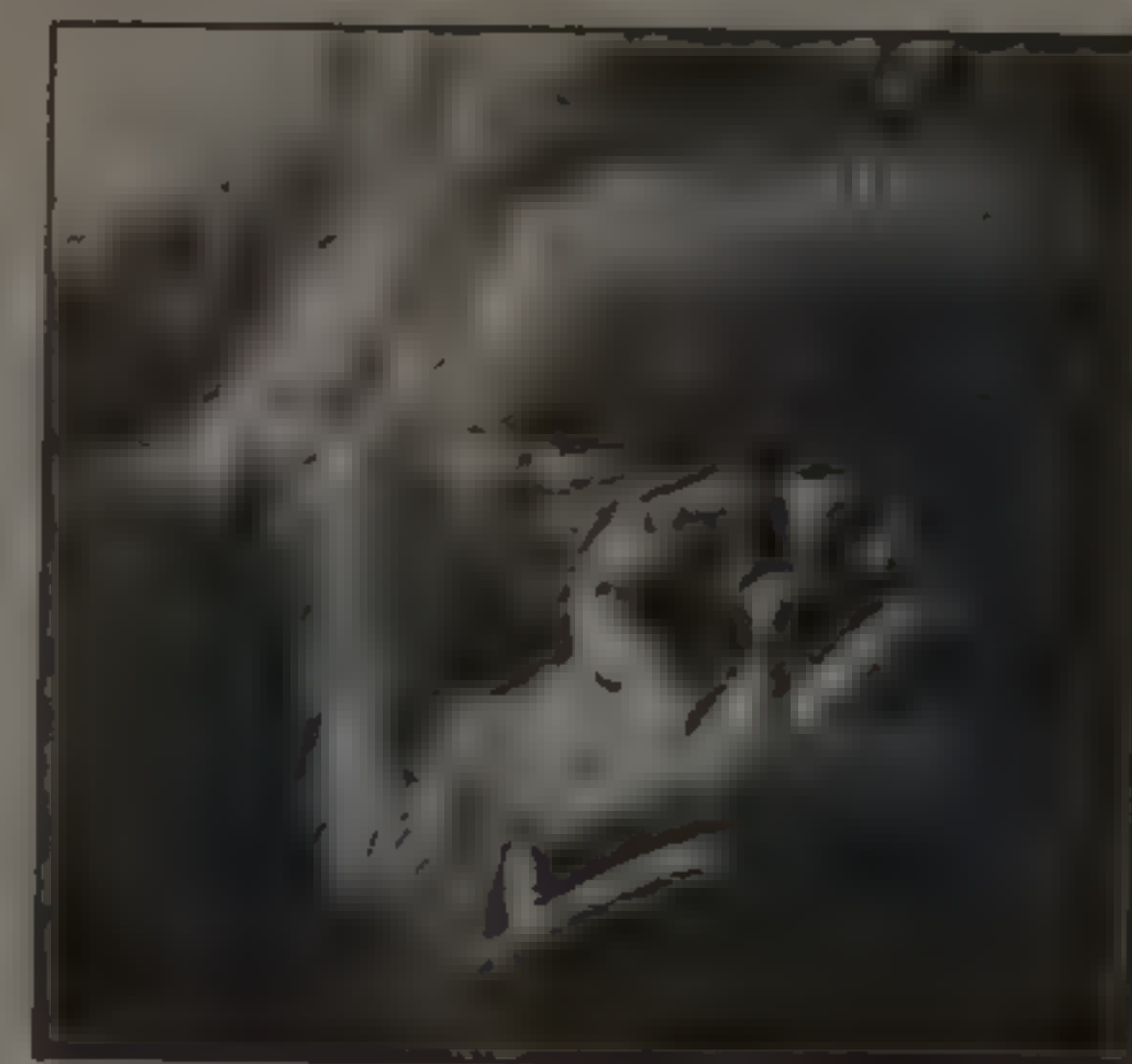
By the end of Jackson's *F/Xtravaganza*, the plot and characters of *Donkey Kong* seem more three-dimensional and complex, mostly because of the blithe racism of this remake.

The racially reductive overtones of *King Kong* are obvious—African monster eyes white woman, whom white men must save; beast is misunderstood and eventually killed, but his love for her was always impossible—and Jackson's adaptation only bolsters the sense of racial threat in the story.

On Skull Island, for example, the crew's first confrontation with the foreign and wild comes when they fight filthy, zombie-like savages, whose glowering eyes and jagged teeth, along with their apparent cannibalism and slavish thrall to their ape-god, mark them out as appallingly base and feral; Kong seems warmly, wonderfully human by comparison.

(And how come the natives can build a fortress and drawbridge—but not boats so they could leave this super-sized mutant hellscape?)

The crew, desperate to sail home, suddenly has a change of heart when



Ann Darrow is kidnapped by one of those dastardly natives. So they all plod through an island of dinosaurs, giant insects, and mega-bats for a full day to save the imperiled actress.

Along the way, unfortunately, Asian Man Of No Lines, Wise Black Mentor To White Boy, and Token New Zealand Maori Character are killed off in the quest for the blonde, blue-eyed princess. Oh, well.

Cut to the climax, where Ann Darrow's beautiful fairness, accentuated by her white dress, glows against Kong's black skin while they climb the world's biggest phallic symbol, before the rapacious foreign monster is brought down by the military might of the United States Army.

And then our Aryan heroine can, at last, swoon into the arms of single white male Jack Driscoll. ▽

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Ballet movie not just for season ticket-holders

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

symphonic ballet to London audiences in 1933 and increased the prominence of men in the company.

The company toured the US in 1934, but soon Basil and Massine clashed and, by 1937, Massine had created the new Ballets Russe de Monte Carlo, while Basil formed the Original Ballets Russe. A battle for dancers and audiences began that would see, with the outbreak of war in Europe, the competing companies toeing the boards in Middle America, Hollywood and Latin America.

BALLET NOW SEEMS to exist in a rarefied, aristocratic, even pretentious air, so it's fascinating to see crowds of people lining up outside London theatres for ballet rehearsals (though the erotic appearances of the performers may have been the main draw) and to hear misty recollections of once-poor Russian émigrés dancing in costumes created by Matisse or Dali, in front of sets designed by Picasso and Miró.

The sight of Basil's company, with its artists nearly starving, in front of Latin American crowds seems an odd extravagance against the backdrop of World War II, while the clips of Massine's dancers in movies are an intriguing cinematic footnote.

Some of the prima ballerinas interviewed in the film, most of them in

their 70s or 80s, still show off the haughty confidence of their youth.

One remembers some young Russian dancers' protectively catty and vicariously competitive mothers exchanging cutting looks at performances, while another recalls a choreographer who wore white gloves while directing them so that she wouldn't have to touch the girls' sweaty bodies.

Ballets Russes would have been a better documentary if it had cut down on its American perspective, revealed more of the tough slog of training, and skirted around the spotlight glamour to expose more of the backstage liaisons and the politics lurking in the wings.

Only in the doc's final half-hour do we get a better glimpse of diva-ish personalities being slave-driven by taskmaster choreographers, unsettling racial politics, and one of the many romances flitting among the troupes.

The film mostly tries to preserve the veneer of pure art that glosses over the sweat, blood and tears of dancers straining and struggling to perfect graceful moves and statuesque poses.

But if *Ballets Russes* never fully explores the stubborn, arduous passion of ballet, as a survey of two great 20th-century dance companies, it skips along pleasantly enough from pointed anecdotes to historical footage before it closes with a stirring flourish. ▽

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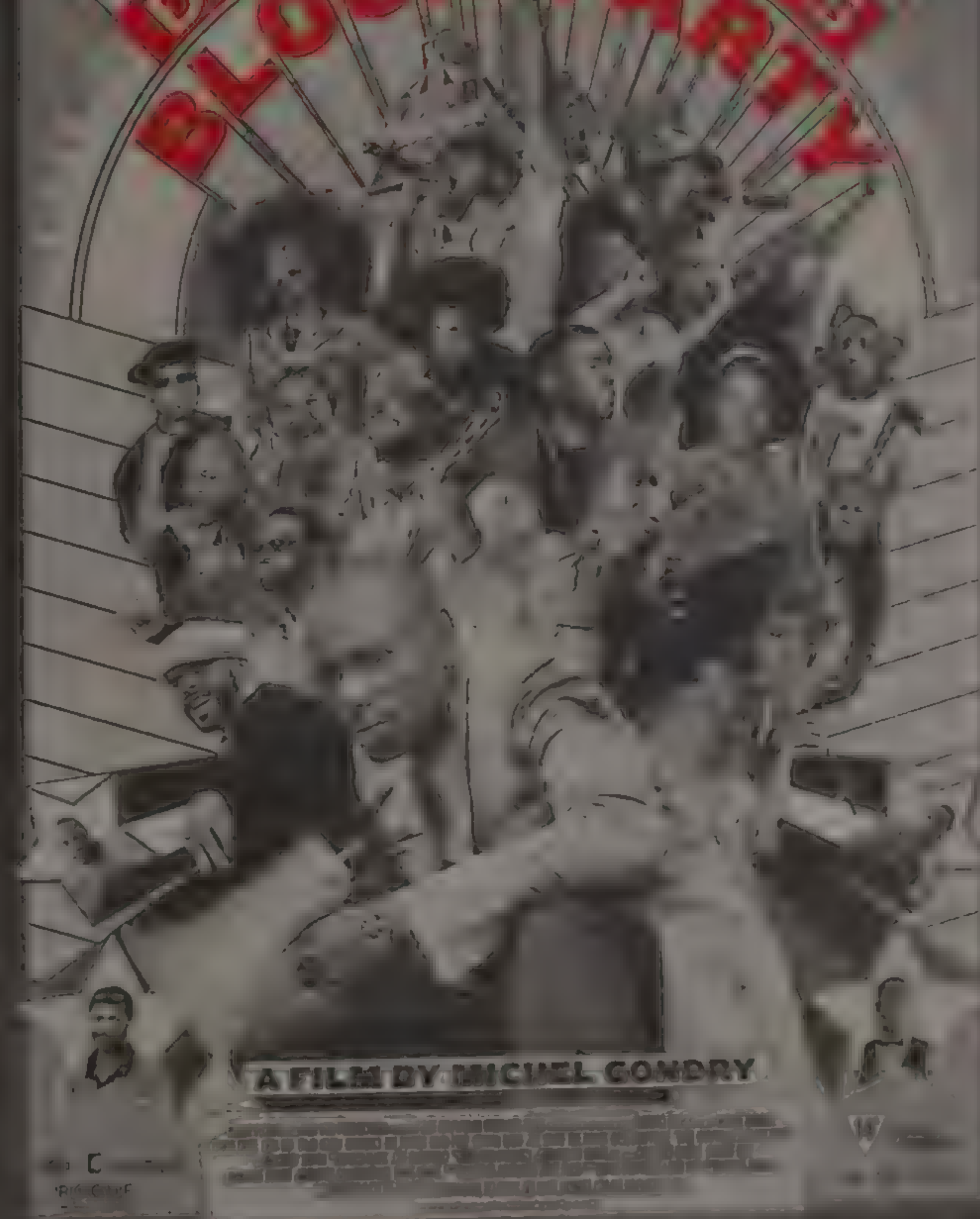
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CHECK THEATRE DIRECTORY
FOR SHOWTIMES

Screw objectivity—go for passion, says documentarian

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 27

VW: Financially speaking, how were you able to manage?

BK: First I got a loan for \$12 000, which I paid back the minute the film was finished. From there it was a matter of writing endless proposals and rallying people together.

All along the way it was hard, but you can't let something like money stop you from doing what you want to do.

VW: Something so valuable and so evident in the film is the sheer amount of time you spent in Harlan County, amongst these people, in their homes and meeting places, on the picket line and the roadblocks.

BK: Well, I really couldn't think of any place I'd rather be. The people became role models to me. To this day I consider *Harlan County* one of

the most incredible experiences in my life.

VW: So you kept waiting it out, even though it might not amount to anything influential. Did you realize what danger you were in?

BK: Eventually, yes. There was a point when the strikebreakers told us if they ever caught us alone at night they'd kill us. So we stayed at one of the miners' homes and we were never out alone. Still, they shot at us with machine guns.

When they were coming across the bridge that day at early dawn, they went right for the crew. In the film, you can see me doing sound and walking toward them, thinking they're not going to hurt a woman. But they got me and the cameraperson and Anne [Lewis], who was

VW: Amongst the miners, did you feel hostility arise from your being outsiders?

BK: Initially nobody trusted us: we had to prove ourselves. But we were there for the long haul and people opened up, especially because we were living with a miner's family.

We'd all sit on the porch at night and talk. We got to know each other, became close. When I see those people today, there's still that close feeling.

VW: While all this was happening, were you consciously adhering to or straying from the then established rules of *cinema vérité* and objectivity?

BK: No. Doing a documentary doesn't mean you have to have objectivity. When not doing straight journalism, I believe it's better if you feel passionate about the characters and the story. There are no rules. And by

then, we had people like the Maysles brothers [*Gimme Shelter*], whom I worked with early on, and their films set a strong example of that.

VW: Was it important for you to end the film somewhat anti-climactically, with no sweeping resolution or summaries?

BK: Well, the miners got their contract. We showed that. And then we had to show that they're still struggling for safety in the mine, for the right to strike, for a lot of the same issues within their union.

In the end, someone was killed trying to get this union, but even with the union, you have to keep on fighting.

I don't think it was anti-climactic, I think it just showed that we're not finished yet, that we have to keep going. If *Harlan County* is about anything, it's about perseverance. **V**

Eight hot dogs wither in Antarctic winter

FAMILY

NOW PLAYING
EIGHT BELOW
DIRECTED BY FRANK MARSHALL
WRITTEN BY DAVID DIGILIO
STARRING PAUL WALKER, BRUCE GREENWOOD,
TIMOTHY RATTEN

JOSEF BRAUN / josef@vuwweekly.com

Disney's *Eight Below*, based on the 1983 Japanese film *Nankyoku Monogatari*, tells the story of a two-man Antarctic meteorite-finding expedition thwarted by a wicked tempest where, in all the hullabaloo to evacuate camp, eight handsome and hard-working sled dogs get left behind.

While no one's happy about this—especially not the ambitious scientist (Bruce Greenwood) who is seemingly punished for dreaming of faraway planets while disobeying the warnings of nature—it's our heroic wilderness guide, the unambiguously named Jerry Sheppard (Paul Walker), who takes it really, really hard.

His inner torment about abandoning his eight best friends resembles pure obsession. Months pass and the unlucky pooches must surely have succumbed to desolation and brutal winter weather, but Jerry lays awake nights until he finds a way to return and, if not rescue them, at least know their fate.

AT TWO HOURS, *Eight Below* is a lot of dog movie, particularly since its ideal audience is kids. Its characters are a bit flat, if not extraneous (like Jason Biggs's ostensible comic relief), while the dogs are endearing and fun to watch, if not exactly on par with *The Littlest Hobo*.

Yet the film does offer fantastic vistas: blinding white snow and cobalt skies, snow scattering serpentine across undulating ice fields frozen seas and beached whales.

Walker's hardly the most interesting actor in the world, but he perfectly serves as a handsome not-too-deep, dog-loving jock leaving the spotlight to his canine survivors, who work together to keep fed and hold out for inevitable salvation.

Frank Marshall's direction and Christopher Rouse's editing suffer from padding (there's a particular excess of reaction shots), but the action scenes are engaging and refreshingly clear, while not too freaky for the little ones. **V**



Spymate has a tired monkey on its back

SONYA SOLO / sonya@vuwweekly.com

Chris Potter is probably best remembered for his television role in *Kung Fu: The Legend* as a detective whose father, a butt-kicking Shaolin priest, always pulled him out of every predicament. In *Spymate*, Potter's character is a secret agent, and it's not his father but a chimpanzee who's always saving his ass.

The change is not for the better—although this is in no way the

Mike Muggins (Potter) and Minkey (the chimp) were part of an elite spy team until Mike retired in order to raise his daughter Amelia (Emma Roberts), who grows up to

But when Amelia is kidnapped by a mad scientist who wants to use her invention for his own evil purposes, Mike and Minkey come out of retirement to save the day.

Aided by a lot of gadgetry and some hype, *Spymate* is a formulaic movie that travels to Jamaica and Japan on a quest to unravel the mystery and save the girl.

It seems like your average family-friendly movie, and it is. Very average. A formulaic script leaves the actors to work with characters that

COMEDY

OPENS FRI, FEB 24

SPYMATE

DIRECTED BY ROBERT VINCE

WRITTEN BY VINCE, ANNA MCROBERTS

STARRING CHRIS POTTER, EMMA ROBERTS,

RICHARD KID

are flat, even for a spy flick. While there are some failed attempts to make the father-daughter relationship more dynamic by introducing the fact that Amelia doesn't believe her father is a spy, their interactions are awkward and unconvincing.

THE GOOD NEWS is this film is perfectly harmless, being a sex- and violence-free version of a James Bond flick. All the gadgets and spy speak are simplified so that a seven-year-old could easily understand them.

"The monkey has a name: Minkey the Monkey," an enemy agent reports ominously to his superior. Well, if you think about it, the dialogues in a movie about a monkey are a lot more advanced than that.

While analytically minded adults may find this movie annoying, young children will enjoy it—although the credit should go not to the film-makers but to the chimp, who is the only one here doing an excellent job. **V**

5 ACADEMY AWARD NOMINATIONS
INCLUDING
BEST ACTOR • BEST PICTURE
BEST SUPPORTING ACTRESS • BEST ACHIEVEMENT IN DIRECTING • BEST ADAPTED SCREENPLAY

WINNER
GOLDEN GLOBE AWARD
BEST ACTOR • PHILIP SEYMOUR HOFFMAN

WINNER
BAFTA AWARD
BEST ACTOR • PHILIP SEYMOUR HOFFMAN

"IT'S A KNOCKOUT!" "TWO THUMBS WAY UP!"

Philip Seymour Hoffman

capote

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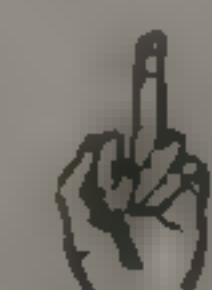


As thugsploitation vehicles go, Paul Walker's latest is *Running* on empty—not fear

HEARTTHROB IS TOO PRETTY TO BE A BELIEVABLE GANGSTER

TYSON KABAN / tyson@vuweekly.com

A hooker cries, "Lay off of me, you fuckin' gray-mouthed, limp-dicked mac daddy pimp!" after having her head slammed into a parked car's headlight by her infuriated boss, and a low-level gangster screams, "Fuck you! You fuckin' motherfuckin' fuck-head!" right before blowing off a crooked cop's junk with a pistol.



Those are just two of the many wonderful moments the thugsploitation flick *Running Scared* has to offer, and believe me, the fun doesn't end there.

There's enough gunshots and gore, full-frontal nudity (both shaved and *au naturel*, mind you), a pair of proper pedophiles straight out of Stepford, Russian crack-heads and hockey-playing goons who use pucks as devices of torture to delight even the most discriminating filmgoer.

And by "discriminating," I really mean "13-year-old who snuck into an R-rated and thinks guns, fast cars and boobs are awesome!"

THE FILM'S "HERO" Joey (Paul Walker) is the hired muscle for a New Jersey mob. After a drug deal goes south and three crooked cops are shot into swiss cheese in the film's opening scene, Joey is put in charge of disposing of the evidence: a one-of-a-kind gun.

Instead of tossing the piece into a river, Joey hides the gun in his basement where his son's pal Oleg (Cameron Bright) comes upon it.

Oleg takes the gun to his home next door, only to shoot his meth-dealing, physically abusive step-dad before fleeing into the night with

COMEDY

OPENING FEB. 24

RUNNING SCARED

WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY WAYNE KRAMER
STARRING PAUL WALKER, VERA FARMIGA,
CAMERON BRIGHT

the incriminating evidence

Needless to say, Joey is not impressed and spends the night hunting down the kid and the gun in one sex-, curse-, blood-, gun- and naked lady-filled situation after another

BUT THERE IS no suspense and each twist and turn is so lame you'll seriously find yourself laughing out loud in disbelief. Writer-director Wayne Kramer's talent clearly lies in making scripts more interesting by infusing them with every possible variation of the word "fuck," and unfortunately it seems as if his breakthrough script, 2003's critically-acclaimed *The Cooler*, was just a fluke (see 2004's *Mindhunters*)

As for the actors, Paul Walker's appearance detracts from his role; he's just way too clean-cut to convincingly play a dirty thug

And even Cameron Bright, who demonstrated *the ability to play a creepy, homicidal teenager* in *Birth*, delivers each line so flatly that he comes off more like he's semi-retarded than a victimized youth

This is quite possibly the most excessive, most unnecessary film ever made and only deserves as much attention as you would pay to a messy car crash: you drive by it, take a quick look and keep on driving

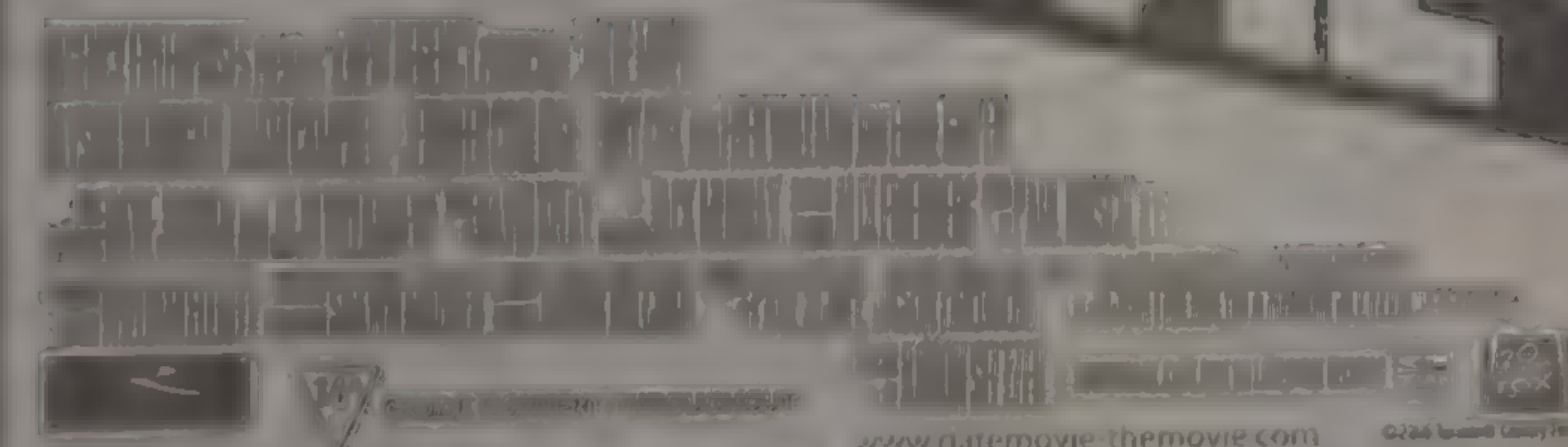
Because no one really needs to see that. ♥

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SHERIDAN SOUTH COMMON CLAREVIEW NORTH EDMONTON GALAXY GRANDIN GEMINI CINEMA

Local high school invaded by evil, human-eating aliens

INTERVIEW trent@vancouverweekly.com

You'd think that visiting the set of a sci-fi, sex-spoof horror movie would be a lot like going to a college bush party. Scantly clad women, bad jokes and various incarnations of human depravity involving livestock or pudding all come to mind.

But the set of *Decoys: Rebirth* was different than that. It was more like watching a well-oiled machine going about its well-programmed ways.

Rebirth, the sequel to Matthew Hastings's *Decoys*, follows a similar premise. In this production, a group of alien creatures wait to lure them in, subdue them, then use them as gestation pods for their extraterrestrial babies.

In this incarnation directed by Jeffery Lando, however, previous *Decoys* heroes Luke Callahan (Canuck Corey Sevier) and Constance (Kim Poirier) are joined by Sam Compton (Vancouver

BEHIND THE SCENES

vente Tyler Johnston)

Johnston's character is the average co-ed vying for a sweetheart as well as an education, while his roommates, being the rudimentary males that they are, come up with a game to see who can get laid the most by the end of the semester.

But something is amiss on the campus and people are starting to vanish. It's up to Sam, his friend Stephanie (Edmontonian Kailin See), and witty scientist Amanda Geisner (Dina Meyer of *Star Trek* fame), as well as Constance and Luke, to figure the mystery out and save the day. It's sort of like a *Scooby Doo* episode with more boobies.

THE LOCATION: An old high school in the city's north end that's been transformed into a movie set, was a func-



tional filmmaking factory from top to bottom. The upper floors were relegated to the make-up and props crew,

while the filming went on in the basement. The school cafeteria, however, kept its cool '70s cafeteria feel—

except it had better food.

The basement, a cramped series of dirt floors and metal doors, seemed a perfect spot to shoot a visceral and gooey alien battle scene. However, aside from a few well-dressed corpses laying about the set, the days of grisly prosthetics and buckets of oozing brain matter are gone, replaced by actors and post-production computer effects.

The only unplanned excitement of the day took place in the line-up for lunch. While retrieving his meal, star Cory Sevier had a brief finger malfunction and dropped his hot plate of food. After scalding his hand he blurted out, "It's because I have a lot of K-Y jelly on my hands." Stopping for a second to realize what he had just said aloud to the group of onlookers he quickly added, "It's for a scene; I promise, it's for a scene!"

I didn't think it was *that* kind of movie. ▽

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The only date that *Date Movie's* good for is a date to suck-town

TYSON KABAN / tyson@vancouverweekly.com

If any genre lends itself perfectly to satire, it's the romantic comedy.

Most films in the vein are already so cheesy and unrelenting in said cheese that they're pretty much *pre-fab*.

so it doesn't seem like it would be that difficult to make a clever spoof of a genre that's basically already a joke.

Well, apparently it is that hard because even "two out of the six writers of *Date Movie*" admitted that such a parody—the stale *Date Movie*—even remotely humorous.

The obvious references begin with the main character's name, Julia Jones (Alyson Hannigan), and don't stop for

REVUE

NOW PLAYING DATE MOVIE

DIRECTED AND WRITTEN BY JASON FRIEDBERG,
ADAM CAMPBELL
STARRING ALYSON HANNIGAN, ADAM CAMPBELL,
GRANT FONCKYERDODER

the rest of the film.

She's overweight and keeps a diary, works in her father's Greek restaurant, has an Indian mother who's only desire is for Julia to procreate, visits a little-person date doctor named Hitch, becomes engaged to a British suitor named Grant Fonckyerdoder (Adam Campbell) on *The Bachelor*.

But each reference is, well, only referenced. It's not enough just to briefly

introduce and, in some cases, simply repeat a joke from another movie without elaborating or adding something original to the mix.

IT'S THE OBVIOUS, innocent humour that lands most of the time. Julia's propensity for impromptu dance routines are actually quite entertaining, whereas the several gags involving human hairballs are just sick.

And as Julia, Hannigan is quite possibly the only actress to look as adorable in a fat-suit as she does in real life (that was a compliment). But she's still no Anna Faris (that was not a compliment) and *Date Movie* is clearly no *Scary Movie* (again, not a compliment). ▽

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SAT & SUN MATINEE 2:00 PM

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NIGHTLY 7:00 & 9:15 PM
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THEATRE
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CAPOTE
5 ACADEMY AWARD NOMINATIONS
NIGHTLY 7:00 & 9:15 PM
SAT & SUN MATINEE 2:00 PM

FILM LISTINGS

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 24 - THURSDAY, MARCH 1, 2006

All showtimes are subject to change at any time. Please contact theatre for confirmation.

CHABA THEATRE-JASPER

6094 Connaught Dr., Jasper, 852-4748

THE PINK PANTHER (PG) Fri Sat 7:00 9:10 Sun-Thu 8:00

GLORY ROAD (PG) Fri Sat 7:00 9:10 Sun-Wed 8:00

CINEMA AT THE CENTRE/WFS FILM CLUB

Stanley A. Milner Library Theatre, 7 St. Winston
Liberal Arts Centre, 7th Fl.

ME AND THE MOSQUE (STC) Sun 2:00

CINEMA CITY 12/MOVIES 12

Cinema 12-3633-99 SL-463-0491

THE NEW WORLD (PG, violence, DTS Digital) Sat Sun 10:45 Daily 1:30 4:00 6:30 9:00 Mon-Thu 12:05

HOSTEL (18A, explicit violence, disturbing content, sexual content, DTS Digital) Sat Sun 11:05 Daily 1:25 3:55 7:30 9:45 Fri Sat late show 12:00

THE RINGER (PG, crude content) Sat Sun 11:25 Daily 1:55 4:40 7:10 9:25 Fri Sat late show 11:50

PRIDE AND PREJUDICE (G) Sat Sun 11:00 Daily 1:45 4:30 7:20 9:55 Fri Sat late show 12:30 Kids Cabin Fever for Mar 2: 1:45

HARRY POTTER AND THE GOBLET OF FIRE: THE IMAX EXPERIENCE (PG, frightening scenes, not recommended for young children) Sat Sun 11:45 Daily 3:10 5:40 8:10 10:40

THE FAMILY STONE (PG) Sat Sun 11:15 Daily 1:35 4:05 6:55 9:35 Fri Sat late show 12:05

LAST HOLIDAY (PG) Sat Sun 11:10 Daily 1:40 4:15 7:00 9:30 Fri Sat late show 12:15

CHICKEN LITTLE (G) Sat Sun 11:45 Daily 2:15 4:45 7:15 9:15 Fri Sat late show 11:35

RENT (PG, mature themes) Daily 1:25 7:05 Fri Sat late show 12:10

RUMOR HAS IT (PG, not recommended for young children, mature themes) Sat Sun 11:20 Daily 2:05 4:35 7:25 9:55 Fri Sat late show 11:55

THE PRODUCERS (PG, crude content, not recommended for young children) Sat Sun 10:50 Daily 4:10 9:40 7:35 10:05 Fri Sat late show 12:30

JUST FRIENDS (14A) Sat Sun 11:40 Daily 2:10 4:25 7:35 10:05 Fri Sat late show 12:30

YOURS, MINE AND OURS (G) Sat Sun 11:30 Daily 1:50 4:20 7:20 9:20 Fri Sat late show 11:30

Movies 12-130 Ave 50 SL-472-9779

THE NEW WORLD (PG, violence, DTS Digital) Sat Sun 10:45 Daily 1:20 4:05 6:50 9:35 Fri Sat late show 12:05

HOSTEL (18A, explicit violence, disturbing content, sexual content, DTS Digital) Sat Sun 11:20 Daily 1:30 4:30 7:40 10:05 Fri Sat late show 12:20

THE RINGER (PG, crude content) Sat Sun 11:05 Daily 1:55 4:40 7:35 10:00 Fri Sat late show 12:15

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THE FAMILY STONE (PG) Sat Sun 11:30 Daily 2:00 4:50 7:20 9:50 Fri Sat late show 11:50

LAST HOLIDAY (PG) Sat Sun 11:25 Daily 1:45 4:15 7:00 9:40 Fri Sat late show 11:55

CHICKEN LITTLE (G) Sat Sun 11:10 Daily 1:10 3:10 5:05 7:15 9:20 Fri Sat late show 11:20

RUMOR HAS IT (PG, not recommended for young children, mature themes) Sat Sun 11:20 Daily 1:50 4:55 7:30 9:45 Fri Sat late show 11:45

KISS KISS BANG BANG (14A, violence, coarse language throughout) Sat Sun 11:15 Daily 1:40 4:35 7:10 9:35 Fri Sat late show 12:00

JUST FRIENDS (14A) Sat Sun 11:40 Daily 2:15 5:00 7:45 10:10 Fri Sat late show 12:10

YOURS, MINE AND OURS (G) Sat Sun 11:35 Daily 2:05 4:45 7:25 9:25 Fri Sat late show 11:25

CITY CENTRE

10200-102 Ave 421-7020

BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN (14A, mature themes, sexual content, DTS Digital) Sun 12:30 3:40 6:40 9:45 (Dolby Stereo Digital) Fri-Sat Mon-Thu 12:30 3:40 6:40 9:45

THE MATADOR (14A, coarse language, sexual content) Dolby Stereo Digital Daily 12:00 2:20 4:40 7:20

WALK THE LINE (PG, mature themes, not recommended for young children) DTS Digital Daily 12:20 3:20 6:30 9:25

MATCH POINT (14A, mature themes) DTS Digital Daily 1:20 4:10 6:55

FINAL DESTINATION 3 (18A, gory scenes) Dolby Stereo Digital Daily 9:55

THE PINK PANTHER (PG, Dolby Stereo, Digital) Daily 12:10 2:30 4:50 7:10 9:50

FIREWALL (14A, DTS Digital) Daily 1:10 4:20 6:50 9:30

IMAGINE ME AND YOU (14A, DTS Digital, Daily 1:40)

FREEDOMLAND (14A, coarse language, mature themes) DTS Digital Daily 12:50 3:50 7:30 10:10

RUNNING SCARED (STC, Dolby Stereo, Digital) Daily 1:00 4:00 7:00 10:00

MADEA'S FAMILY REUNION (PG, mature themes, DTS Digital) Daily 12:40 3:30 7:40 10:15

CLAREVIEW

1702-50 Ave. 432-8888

FIREWALL (14A) Fri-Sun 2:10 5:00 7:30 10:00 Mon-Thu 4:00 6:30 9:00

WHEN A STRANGER CALLS (14A, frightening scenes) Daily 9:10

FREEDOMLAND (14A, coarse language, mature themes) Fri-Sun 1:30 4:00 6:30 9:00 Mon-Thu 4:00 6:30 9:00

WALK THE LINE (PG, mature themes, not recommended for young children) Fri-Sun 12:50 3:50 6:45 9:35 Mon-Thu 3:50 6:45 9:35

DOOGAL (G) Fri-Sun 12:40 2:40 4:40 7:40 Mon-Thu 4:40 7:40

FINAL DESTINATION 3 (18A, gory scenes) Daily 9:45

CURIOUS GEORGE (G) Fri-Sun 1:10 3:40 6:50 Mon-Thu 1:10 3:40 6:50

UNDERWORLD: EVOLUTION (18A, gory violence) Daily 9:05

RUNNING SCARED (STC) Fri-Sun 1:50 4:40 7:20 9:50 Mon-Thu 4:40 7:20 9:50

DATE MOVIE (14A, crude content throughout) Fri-Sun 1:20 3:30 5:30 7:50 10:10 Mon-Thu 3:30 5:30 7:50 10:10

THE PINK PANTHER (PG) Fri-Sun 1:40 4:10 7:10 9:20 Mon-Thu 4:10 7:10 9:20

EIGHT BELOW (G) Fri-Sun 1:00 4:20 7:00 9:40 Mon-Thu 4:20 7:00 9:40

GALAXY CINEMAS - SHERWOOD PARK

2222 Sherwood Drive, 466-9922

DOOGAL (G) Fri 4:45 6:50 Sat Sun 12:45 2:45 4:45 6:50 Mon-Thu 6:50

RUNNING SCARED (STC) Fri 3:40 6:45 9:35 Sat-Sun 12:50 3:40 6:45 9:35 Mon-Thu 6:45 9:35

DATE MOVIE (14A, crude content throughout) Fri 4:40 7:30 10:00 Sat-Sun 1:40 4:40 7:30 10:00 Mon-Thu 7:30 10:00

EIGHT BELOW (G) Fri 4:00 7:00 9:50 Sat-Sun 1:00 4:00 7:00 9:50 Mon-Thu 7:00 9:50

FREEDOMLAND (14A, coarse language, mature themes) Fri 3:50 6:40 9:15 Sat-Sun 1:10 3:50 6:40 9:15 Mon-Thu 6:40 9:15

CURIOUS GEORGE (G) Fri 4:50 7:05 Sat-Sun 12:30 2:40 4:50 7:05 Mon-Thu 7:05

FINAL DESTINATION 3 (18A, gory scenes) Daily 9:10

FIREWALL (14A) Fri 4:30 7:10 9:55 Sat-Sun 1:20 4:30 7:10 9:55 Mon-Thu 7:10 9:55

THE PINK PANTHER (PG) Fri 4:20 7:20 9:45 Sat-Sun 1:30 4:20 7:20 9:45 Mon-Thu 7:20 9:45

WHEN A STRANGER CALLS (14A, frightening scenes) Daily 9:20

NANNY MCPHEE (G) Fri 4:10 7:15 9:40 Sat-Sun 1:15 4:10 7:15 9:40 Mon-Thu 7:15 9:40

BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN (14A, mature themes, sexual content) Fri 3:30 6:30 9:30 Sat-Sun 12:40 3:30 6:30 9:30 Mon-Thu 6:30 9:30

BARNEAU

8712-109 SL 433-0725

A GOOD WOMAN (PG) Daily 7:00 9:00 Sat-Sun 2:00

GATEWAY 8

8888 Gateway Trail, 433-8888

FIREWALL (14A, DTS Digital) Fri-Sat Mon-Thu 7:10 9:45 Sun 1:20 4:10 7:10 9:45

HOSTEL (18A, explicit violence, disturbing content, sexual content, DTS Digital) Fri-Sat Mon-Thu 7:20 9:55 Sun 1:10 4:00 7:00 9:45

THE NEW WORLD (PG, violence, DTS Digital) Fri-Sat Mon-Thu 8:25 9:25 Sun 12:40 3:35 6:35 9:25

TRISTAN AND ISOLDE (14A, DTS Digital) Fri-Sat Mon-Thu 6:50 9:30 Sun 1:10 3:45 6:50 9:30

MATCH POINT (14A, mature themes, DTS Digital) Fri-Sat Mon-Thu 7:00 9:40 Sun 1:05 3:25 7:00 9:40

SYRIANA (14A, violence, DTS Digital) Fri-Sat Mon-Thu 4:40 9:35 Sun 12:55 4:00 6:40 9:35

BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE 2 (PG, DTS Digital) Fri-Sat Mon-Thu 6:30 Sun 1:00 3:30 6:30

MUNICH (18A, violence, DTS Digital) Fri-Sat Mon-Thu 8:50 Sun 1:00 4:20 8:50

MERE JEEVAN SAATHI (14A) Sat Mon-Thu 6:45 Sun 1:00 4:00

GRANDIN THEATRE

Grandin Mall, St. Winston Churchill Ave. SL 466-2222

DATE MOVIE (14A, crude content throughout) Daily 1:40 3:40 5:40 7:40 9:30

THE PINK PANTHER (PG, Dolby Stereo, Digital) Daily 1:05 3:05 5:05 7:05 9:05

DOOGAL (G) Daily 1:00 3:00 5:00 7:00

MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA (PG, mature themes, not recommended for young children) Daily 6:30

CURIOUS GEORGE (G) Daily 1:35 3:35 5:35 7:15

BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN (14A, mature themes, sexual content) Daily 9:00

EIGHT BELOW (G) Daily 1:15 3:50 6:30 9:55

LEDUC CINEMAS

1702-50 St. Louis, 455-2700

NANNY MCPHEE (G) Daily 7:05 9:25 Sat-Sun 1:00 3:25

CURIOUS GEORGE (G) Daily 7:00 Sat-Sun 1:05 3:15

EIGHT BELOW (G) Daily 7:00 9:25 Sat-Sun 1:10 3:35

FIREWALL (14A) Daily 6:50 9:20 Sat-Sun 12:50 3:25

BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN (14A, mature themes, sexual content) Daily 8:45

MAGIC LANTERN CINEMA - CAMROSE

Camrose, 720-666-2144

THE PINK PANTHER (PG) Daily 7:05 9:00 Sat-Sun 2:00

EIGHT BELOW (G) Daily 6:50 9:05 Sat-Sun 1:50

FIREWALL (14A) Daily 6:55 9:15 Sat-Sun 1:55

NANNY MCPHEE (G, Digital) Sat-Sun 2:00

MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA (PG, mature themes, not recommended for young children) Fri-Thu 7:30

CURIOUS GEORGE (G) Daily 7:10 Sat-Sun 2:10

WHEN A STRANGER CALLS (14A, frightening scenes) Daily 9:10

MAGIC LANTERN CINEMA - SPRUCE GROVE

205 Main St., Spruce Grove, 972-2222

EIGHT BELOW (G) Daily 7:00 9:15 Sat-Sun Mon 2:00

METRO CINEMA

1150-814 Ave., Camrose, 720-666-2144

BALLETS RUSSES (STC) Fri-Sat-Sun Mon 7:00

HARLAN COUNTY, USA (STC) Fri-Sat-Sun Mon 9:00

THE EDGE CODES (STC) Thu 7:00

NEW WEST MALL 6

8800-110 St., 444-5555

FUN WITH DICK AND JANE (PG, not recommended for young children) Fri-Sun 2:00 4:15 7:00 9:10 Mon-Wed 7:00 9:10

HOWL'S MOVING CASTLE (PG) Fri-Sun 1:35 3:50 6:10 9:15 Mon-Wed 6:30 9:15

THE RINGER (PG, crude content) Fri-Sun 1:40 4:10 7:20 9:10 Mon-Wed 7:20 9:10

GRANDMA'S BOY (14A, crude sexual content, adult themes) Daily 9:00

THE FAMILY STONE (PG) Fri-Sun 2:10 4:40 6:40 Mon-Wed 6:55 9:40

A HISTORY OF VIOLENCE (18A, gory violence, sexual content) Fri-Sun 2:30 4:40 7:10 9:45 Mon-Wed 7:30 9:45

RUMOR HAS IT... (PG, not recommended for young children, mature themes) Fri-Sun 1:40 4:00 7:10 9:20 Mon-Wed 7:10 9:20

CHICKEN LITTLE (G) Fri-Sun 1:20 4:30 6:40 Mon-Wed 6:40

YOURS, MINE AND OURS (G) Fri-Sun 1:50 4:10 6:40 Mon-Wed 6:40

AEON FLUX (14A) Daily 8:40

NORTH EDMONTON CINEMAS

14201 137th Avenue, 769-732-2222

RUNNING SCARED (STC) Daily 1:14 4:10 7:10 10:10

SPYGLASS (PG) Daily 12:50 3:30 6:10 9:10

DOOGAL (G) Daily 1:10 3:10 5:10 7:10

DATE MOVIE (14A, crude content throughout) Daily 1:20 3:20 5:20 7:20 9:20

EIGHT BELOW (G) Daily 1:10 4:10 7:10 9:10

FREEDOMLAND (14A, coarse language, mature themes) Daily 1:50 4:20 7:10 9:10

CURIOUS GEORGE (G) Daily 1:50 4:20 7:10 9:10

FIREWALL (14A) Daily 1:10 4:20 7:10 10:10

THE PINK PANTHER (PG) Daily 12:40 2:40 5:10 7:40 10:10

FINAL DESTINATION 3 (18A, gory scenes) Daily 3:10 6:10 9:10

WHEN A STRANGER CALLS (14A, frightening scenes) Daily 9:45

NANNY MCPHEE (G) Daily 2:10 5:10 8:10

UNDERWORLD: EVOLUTION (18A, gory violence) Daily 2:10 5:10 8:10 10:20

HOODWINKED (PG) Daily 12:10

BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN (14A, mature themes, sexual content) Daily 1:05 3:55 7:05 10:10

MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA (PG, mature themes, not recommended for young children) Daily 6:40

MUNICH (18A, violence) Daily 8:45

CHRONICLES OF NARNIA: THE LION THE WITCH AND THE WARDROBE (PG, may frighten young children) Daily 12:00 3:10 6:30 9:40

MADEA'S FAMILY REUNION (PG, mature themes) Daily 1:45 5:05 7:45 10:15

PRINCESS

10337-82 Ave. 433-0728

TRANSAMERICA (14A, mature themes) Daily 7:00 9:10

Sat-Sun 2:00

CAPOTE (14A) Daily 6:50 9:15 Sat-Sun 2:30

SILVERCITY WEST



controller.controller takes control of image

INDIE 'IT' BAND SPILLS ABOUT SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND SNOWSTORMS

BRYAN CARROLL / bryan@vueweekly.com

The music industry, not to mention the whole world, is obsessed with image. In reaction, the kids of Toronto's controller.controller do their best to present merely their music and not a contrived version of themselves to their audiences.

"We didn't set out to be a certain way," explains guitarist Scott Kaija, speaking to Vue post-sound check. "I don't think we ever thought that we did shy away from focusing

PREVIEW

WED, MAR 1 (8 PM)
CONTROLLER.CONTROLLER
WITH YOU SAY PARTY! WE SAY DIE!, BOLIDE
STARLITE ROOM, \$16

on individual personalities."

When I mentioned that this reluctance is a fresh take, especially for a band fronted by a female, Kaija told me, "We always looked at our band as a whole, not a singer and a backup band"—and while it is inevitable that sometimes they'll be seen that way,

they try to minimize the viewpoint by refusing to exploit the gender of singer Nirmala Basnayake.

"We play with limited lighting and try to de-emphasize the band as a spectacle, to focus instead on the music," Kaija explains. "We see Nirmala as an instrument. With some other bands I think a lot of it is just their record labels exploiting female sexuality."

ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY PAGE 45

Make Lisa Lashes this one promise: no surprise gifts of illicit drugs

SHEENA ROSSITER / sheena@vueweekly.com

Lisa Lashes is the DJ who last played at Hard House who last played E-town in November 2005. "I like that people remember me, and get excited when I return."

Of course, the fact that world-class DJs don't tend to come to Edmonton with much regularity doesn't hurt that excitement level, a reality that isn't lost on Lashes.

"I don't like to come too often—I want to try and keep people in suspense," she laughs. "I like to pull people into the clubs, and if people know that I'll be back in a month then they show up."

This Friday's engagement at Cowboy's will be one of a handful of times that Lashes, the first female to be

PREVIEW

FRI, FEB 24 (8 PM)
LISA LASHES
WITH GRIFFIN, BIG DADDY
COWBOYS, \$20

ranked in the top 10 of the world's best DJs, has been to Edmonton, and she tours globally almost constantly.

But her enthusiasm for travel has been dampened recently by a sour experience in New Zealand, where an over-zealous fan secretly slipped her a birthday card containing two ecstasy pills which were discovered by customs officials. An understanding judge let her off with a warning, but Lashes is now searched on a regular basis when touring.

It was a bit of a twisted compliment," she says of the incident, "but

thankfully it didn't affect my personal life."

Despite the shock factor of the New Zealand ecstasy incident, however, Lashes's outlook on her fans hasn't changed much. "I love chatting with people before the show," she says. "I'm a sociable person."

Edmonton fans will get to chat with the DJ diva Lashes this Friday, but not before enjoying a planned three-hour set. "The set will begin with break beats and have a build up to hard house," Lashes reveals. "The set is more designed to be a build up rather than full throttled."

Since excitement among Lashes's Edmonton fans has been percolating since last November, however, the build-up has really already happened. ▽

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EDMONTON
JOURNAL OF THE ADVENTURER SOCIETY & DISTORTIONS
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City Streets tour kickoff



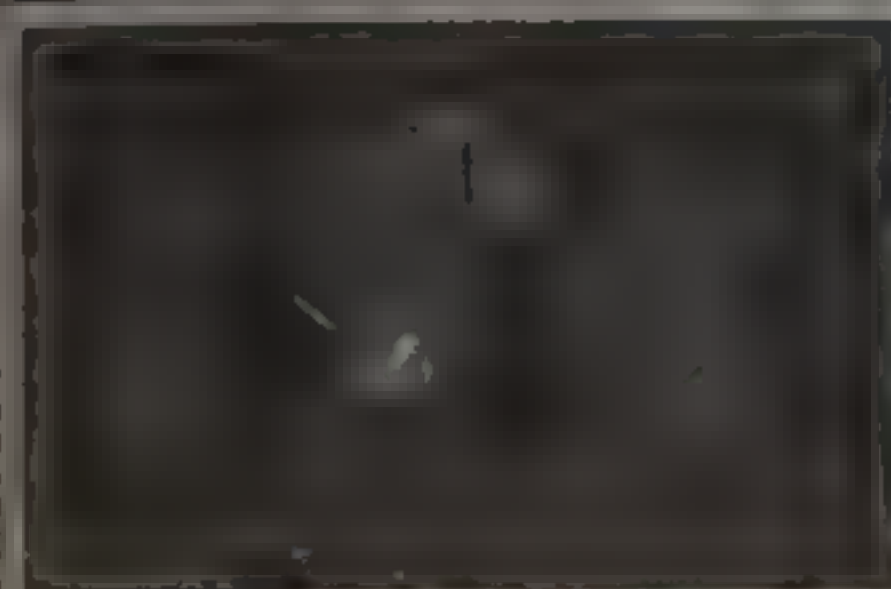
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CD release on smallman records

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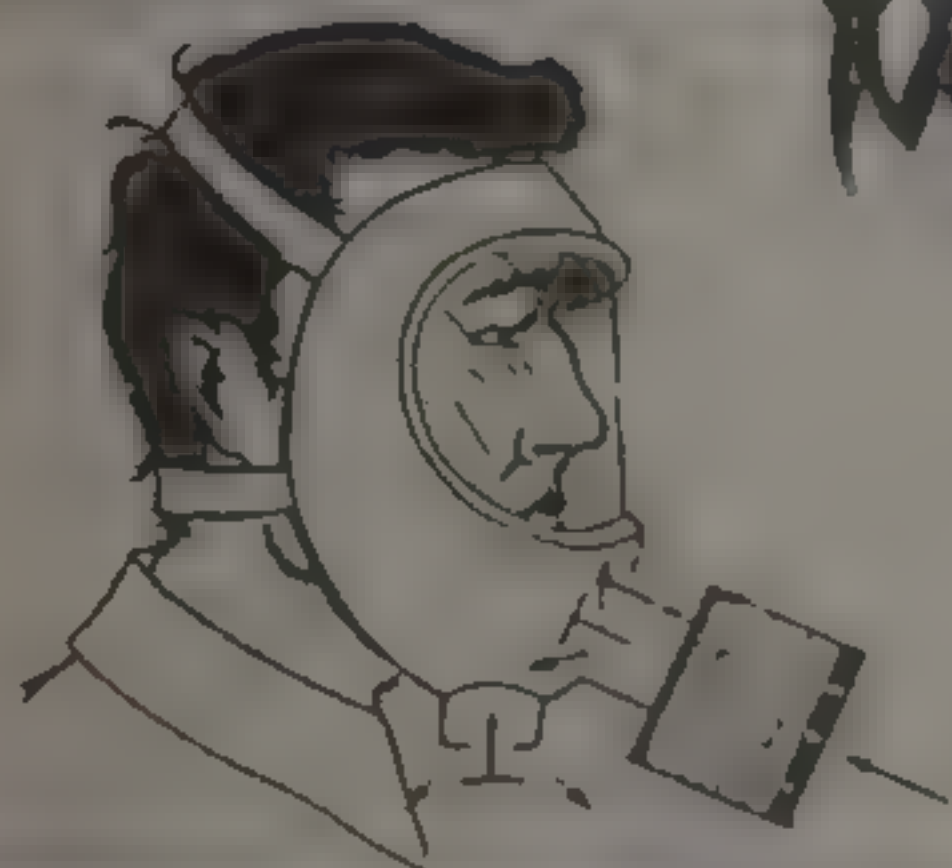
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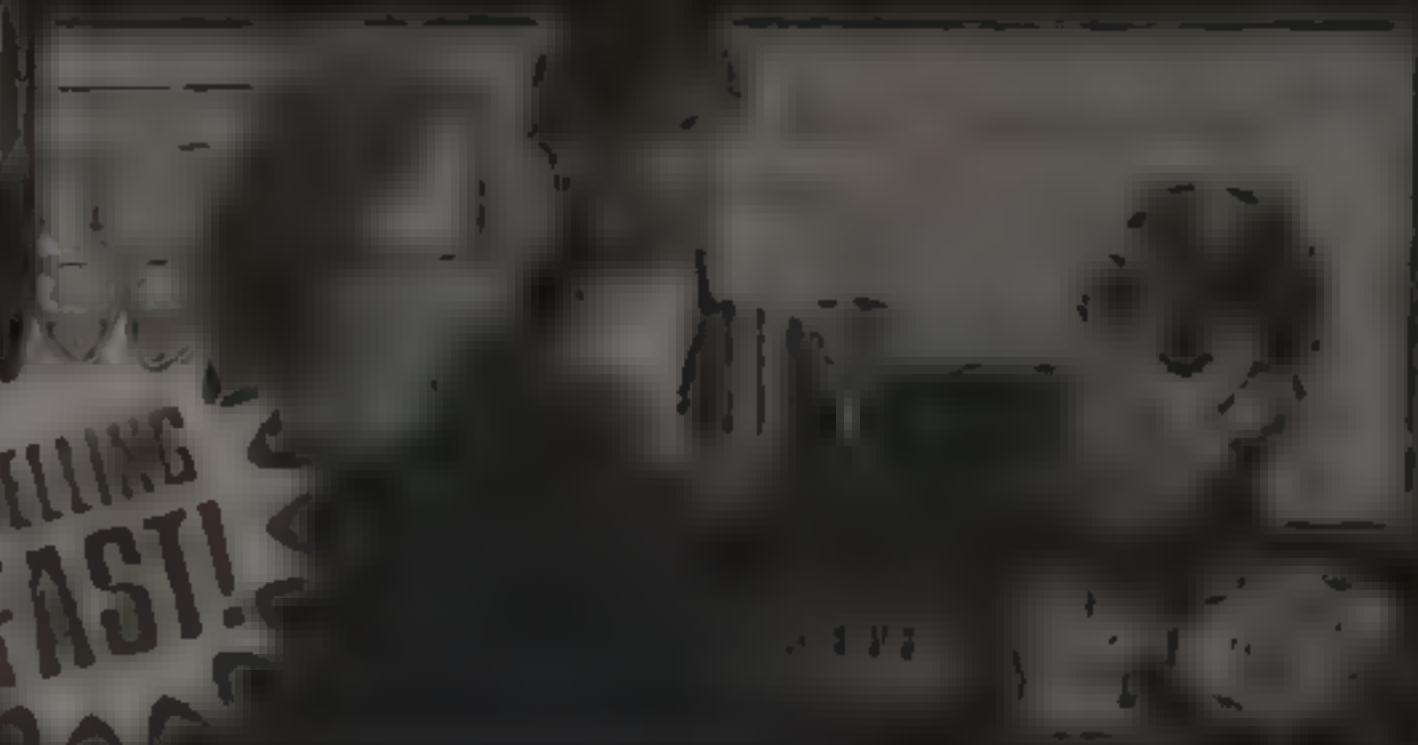
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WITH LUCKER

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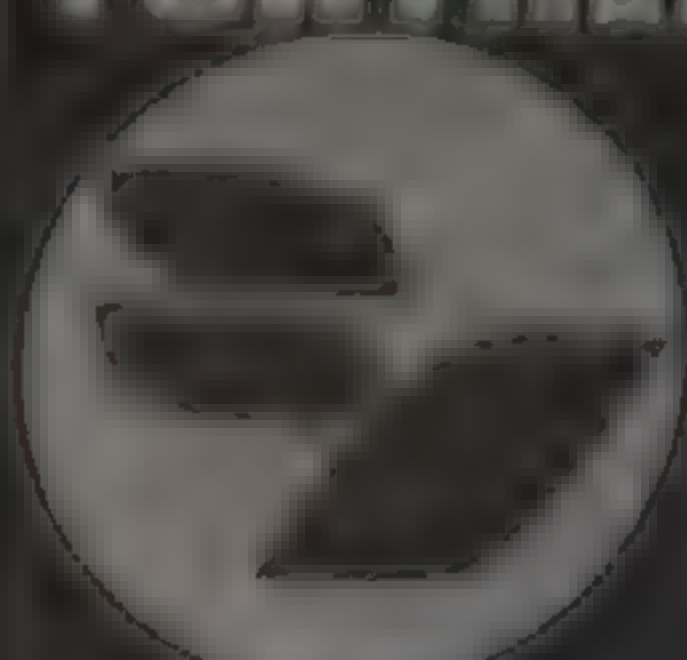
FURTHER SEEMS FOREVER

FAREWELL TOUR!

WITH DRIVE BY PUNCH,

FIELDSTOFLOOD,

AND THE FAILURE



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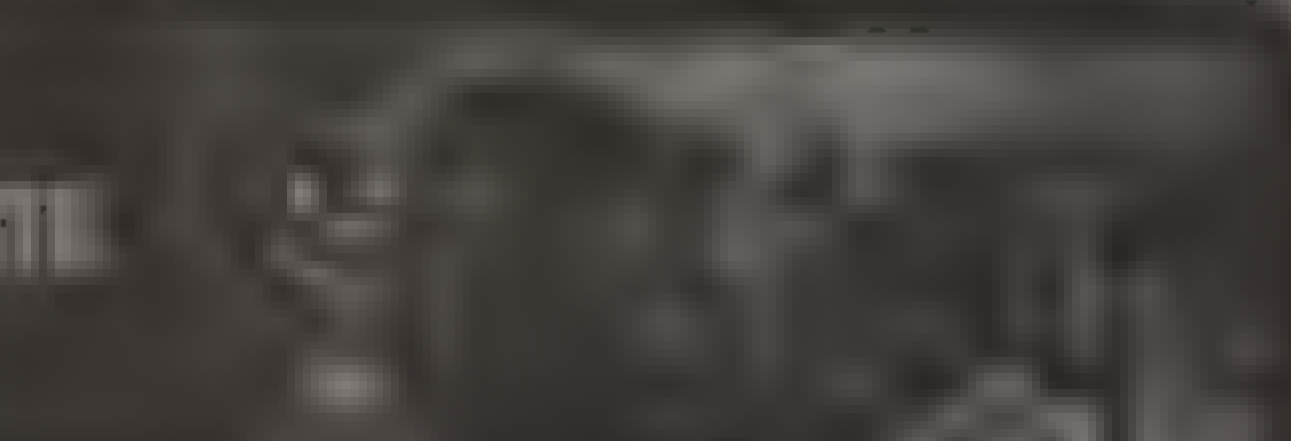
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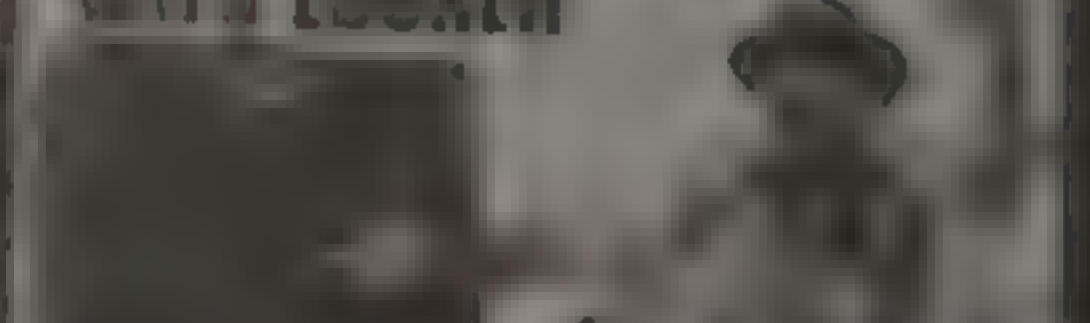
APRIL 22



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APRIL 28

WITH LUCKER



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Face punching-in was a bad start to a good album

DRIVE BY PUNCH TRIUMPH OVER ADVERSITY ON *A GOOD START TO A BAD DAY*

MIKE LAROCQUE / michael@vueweekly.com

A full-length album is a sacred thing for a band, standing not only as a shiny, foil-wrapped trophy of their musical prowess but also removing them from the over-

grounded status of hard-core release a couple of EPs before vanishing into the depths of the local music-scene's "Where are they now?" category

For Edmonton's Drive By Punch, it seemed that latter fate was drawing nearer as their long-awaited LP—finally released at the end of 2005—faced a frustrating array of delays and complications

"Yeah, we ran into a couple of hardships with the album," laughs front-

man Lonnie Artokivi. "Everything from our producer getting his head

punched-in in Kelowna and having to get reconstructive surgery, to errors

that we made as a band on the best

tracks. When we showed our producer

what we had, he didn't really like what

we'd created, so we recorded a couple

more times, he flew here, we drove

there, and we finally got it done."

But with *A Good Start to a Bad Day*

PREVIEW

FRI, FEB 24 (6 PM)
DRIVE BY PUNCH
WITH FURTHER SEEMS FOREVER
FIELDSTOFLOOD, THE FAILURE
RED'S \$17.50

being Drive By Punch's first full-length LP, there was still nervous apprehension when the band finally laid their hands on the finished product. When Artokivi and band-mates Rob Cole, Brady Coate, Chris Ruddy and Shawn Kilgrain listened to the finalized tracks that would be making up their first album, their testament of the band's accomplishments to date, they weren't, in fact, pleased at all—at least not at first

"Once we had the masters back, me and a couple of guys were listening to them and we weren't happy with it. We just felt like, wow, we had done all this work and I personally didn't like what was going on with the tracks. But then I started listening to it again I was just like, 'Sweet. I don't know what I was thinking.' My initial reaction was that it wasn't a fair representation of how much work we put



into making it, but in the end I think it turned out for the best."

THE ALBUM, RELEASED in late November, seems to have allayed the band's initial fears. The 14-track LP is filled with the same raucous, layered tracks featuring multiple-part harmonies that have made the band fan favourites around town, and will only benefit by what Artokivi calls a

CONTINUES ON NEXT PAGE



THE NEW
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March 2, 2006, 7:30pm
Website: www.n-e-w-s.ca

Of Stage and Screen

Mark your calendar for Thursday, March 2, 2006 at 7:30 p.m. The second concert of the NEWS season promises to fill Convocation Hall at the University of Alberta with the glorious melodies made memorable in Hollywood and on Broadway - featuring selections from Star Wars, West Side Story, South Pacific, and more!

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The NEWS offers more than just the finest of wind ensemble music available to Edmonton audiences. The company is dedicated to creating the kind of high quality, accessible entertainment experiences that will bring music fans back for more.

VUEWEEKLY

Open the garage door and let out The Horses

IAN CARROLL / bryan@vuwweekly.com

If imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, then rock 'n' roll must be some sort of all-day flatterfest.

The local garage rock upstarts The Horses are no different: their very name is inspired by Chicago rockers The Ponys.

"The Ponys is such a sweet name, so I said, 'let's be The Horses,'" explains drummer Rene Wilson, "but I'm scared The Ponys will show up and say 'you guys stole our name, kinda.'"

Wilson, who plays in two other local garage-influenced groups (The SubAtomics and The Mixed Signals), is at a loss to explain Edmonton's recent youth-fuelled garage rock explosion. In fact, he's not even sure

PREVIEW

SAT, FEB 25 (7 PM)
THE HORSES
WITH MICHAEL RAULT & THE MIXED SIGNALS,
THE SOUTH SIDE RIOTS, LET'S DANCE, JOEL &
THE LAST OF THE NEIGHBOURS
RIVERDALE HALL, \$8

it ought to be called an explosion.

"Where I go to school, no one knows what garage rock is at all," he laments. "No one listens to any music, not even that emo post-hardcore stuff or whatever."

For Wilson, however, garage rock for comes naturally. "[Mixed Signals frontman] Mike Rault and I are related—our dads are cousins," he explains. "Garage rock is in our blood."

But Wilson is not interested solely in noisy, lo-fi rock; he's excited about the entire scene we've got brewing right here in the River City.

"I'm really in favour of big things happening in Edmonton in the near future—that'd be really exciting," he enthuses. "Edmonton's got what it takes to be a place like Montreal. Maybe it's a little smaller, a little more remote, but it's got what it takes."

For now, though, Wilson is simply excited about The Horses upcoming show, which will be their first ever, kinda. "We played at a kid's birthday party right before Christmas, but it was invite only, you know?" he explains. "This will be our first real show." ▽

For Drive By Punch, new formats put rad back into radio

PHOTOGRAPH BY PHILIPPO PIZZOLI

change in the radio landscape.

With stations like Sonic 102.9 playing more local music (Drive By Punch was the station's Band of the Month last July), promoting home-grown music has gotten at least one step easier.

"If one station starts changing their format to play local music normally instead of just on Sunday night after 11, then that will become the standard across the board," says Artokivi.

"At our show [as Band of the Month] we asked how many people there hadn't seen us before, and more than half of the room hadn't seen us previously—they hadn't heard us before Sonic started playing us. I was walking around the room and didn't recognize any of the people, which was sweet because we had, like, 400 people at a show and half of them are new fans."

So it seems that between the difficulties of getting their record out and the boosts they've gotten on the local scene, Drive By Punch has managed to strike even their musical karma.

With plans to tour over the summer and play Toronto's North by Northeast music festival this June, the band is enjoying the buzz of having not only having boxes of records in their apartments, but also of reaching the point where a one-time garage band gains local recognition.

"It was never like we expected to be at a certain point at a certain time," says Artokivi. "We just kept playing and stayed focused on rehearsal and writing, and it all just sort of happened on its own. Every time a kid tells you that they drove in from Vegreville or Calgary to see you're show, that's really cool. It's overwhelming." ▽

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Our Mercury
Wednesday Night Heroes
City Streets tour kickoff

Friday Feb 24
Our Mercury
CD release on smallman records
Wednesday Night Heroes
City Streets

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DJS

BACKSTAGE TAP AND GRILL
8 p.m. with Atom c
DJ Tim

BUDDY'S NIGHTCLUB
Stardust Lounge with Mz
9 p.m. and Mz Vanity Fair, DJ
Eddy Toonflash

DECADANCE Worship with B
Daddy, DTOR, guests; 10am-
close

GINGUR SKY Furious Fridays
Rotating DJs Vinny Vo, Philippe
Lam, DJ Smoov

LB.'S PUB House band, 9 30pm-1am, no cover

HONEST MUR'S BAR & GRILL Jam session hosted by the Retro Rockets Band; 8pm

NEW YORK BAGEL CAFÉ Marco Claveria (samba to Bolero) every Monday

RIGOLETTO'S CAFÉ Open stage hosted by Dr. Oxide, 7 10pm

TAPHOUSE Monday Live, w/ Big Tickle; 8 30-11 30pm, no cover

DIS

BAR WILD Bar Gone Wild Mondays' Service Industry Night; no minors, 9pm-2am

BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE D

BUDDY'S Achey love and DJ T

FILTHY MCNASTY'S Mondays with DJ SWAG

TUE

LIVE MUSIC

BLIND PIG PUB AND GRILL
Open stage with Mark Ammar

COWBOYS Fat Tuesday Mardi Gras Party

DRUID (JASPER AVENUE)
Open stage with Chris Wynters and guest

WILLIAM'S PLANO BAR
Graham's Twisted Jazz
Standards, 7-10:30pm

LEGENDS PUB Open jam hosted by Gary Thomas

O'BYRNE'S Celtic night with Shannon Johnson and friends, 9-10pm

URBAN LOUNGE Salsa and the City, 9pm, Salsa dance lessons 8pm, \$5 (door)

YARDBIRD SUITE Jam
Session: Jerrold Dubyk, 8-10pm (door)/9pm (show), \$3

CLASSICAL

CONTEMPORARY HALL OF FAME
Masterclass: William Eddins (visiting artist), 3-30pm, free

JAZZ

BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE
Viva with DJ Sean

BOOTH'S
AUGUST 1997

CAUENTE Bashment Tuesday
Reggae open mic with Elite Reggae Sounds, Bomb Squad Q & A, Chrome Nine, Southside Sound, no minors, 11pm, no cover

ESMERALDA'S Top 40, country, R&B with DJ Foreplay, DJ Jimmy

FUNKY BUDDHA 917 426 4400
Laid back S-Funk dance
weekends 8-10pm

GINGER SKY LOUNGE 917 426 4400
Tuesday Top 40 urban dance
with DJ Spazz 9pm-9:17 the
new city

BOULEVARD CITY SUBURBS 917 426 4400
with DJ C & S 10:15-11:15
Friday make

THE ROOST 917 426 4400
with DJ C & S 10:15-11:15
Friday \$4, 10:15-11:15

**SAPPHIRE RESTAURANT
AND LOUNGE** Tapas Tuesday
popular house beats with DJ
Kevin Wong

SPORTSWORLD ROLLER
SKATING DISCO Retro night
music flash backs from the 50s
60s, 70s, '80s and '90s, 7pm-
12 midnight, \$5/\$4 (rentals)

VELVET UNDERGROUND
Youth Beat, hip hop, electro
indie rock, dance punk, funk
with DJ Cadence Weapon, no
minors, 9pm (door), \$2

WUNDERBAR Hipster Twist
with Twister Board and DJ

**WED
LIVE MUSIC**

ATLANTIC TRAP AND GARDEN
Open mic with Duff Robinson
8pm

BLACK DOG TAP HOUSE
Guaranteed, Jntf Stuart, no
cover

SOLARIS FILM BAR
Plays Favourites, 7:30-10:30pm

LEVEL 2 LOUNGE Open Mic

REPTILES AND BIRDS
LIARDS The Metro World Be
Band with Enrique

O'BYRNE'S Chris Wynters a
friends, 9:30pm

WINTH COUNTRY COUNTRY
NITY LEAGUE Northern
Bluegrass Circle Music Socie
bluegrass jam, 7:30pm

RED'S Six Guns, guests, all

ROCKS DALE COMMUNITY HALL Little Flower open stage hosted by Brian Gregg, 8pm

STARITEHOUSE
Controller Controller, You Say Party! We Say Die!, Bolide, The Melgrove Band, no minors, 8pm (door), 9pm (show), \$16 a Unicornettes.com, TicketMaster Megatunes

WILD WEST SALOON Chad Klingner

CLASSICAL

EX-COMMUNALITY THEATRE CHURCH Gordon Ritchie (Celtic harp), 12 10 to 12 50 free

THE

BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE
Gittin' Gulch with DJ Buster Friendly no cover

BUDGY'S *live room*
M Junior with DJ Edd, Toontash, Mia Fellow, Ashley Love, Yokho Oh-no, guests

ESCAPE Wild on Wednesday

EMERALD SKY LOUNGE
Evening Wednesday Br Dangles, no minors, 9pm (door) no cover

LEGENDS PUB Hip hop/R&B with DJ Spincycle

THE COUNTRY CLUB
Garage Rockabilly with DJ Sorurus

RED STAR Funk 'n' Soul funk, soul, disco, no jazz, reggae, hip hop with Cool Curt, Yori, Junior Brown, BEmo

THE ROOST Amateur Strip Weena Luv, Sticky Vicky with DJ Alvaro, \$1 (member) \$4 (non member)

STANDARD Wednesday Go Wild feat with DJ Nestor Delano


STONE THE HOPKINS
Wednesdays: retro alternative dance with DJ Jason, no minors, 9pm (door), \$4

VELVET UNDERGROUND
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FRIDAY-SATURDAY MARCH 3-4

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WHERE THEY ARE VENUE GUIDE

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1800
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ATLANTIC TRAP AND GILL
7714 104 St. 432-4611
B&B CHALET PUB 10010-5
N. 424-1111
B&B COUNTRY HOUSE 8189
N. 424-1111
BAR WILD 10552 82 Ave. 951-
1111
BILLY BOB'S LOUNGE
11711 1111
BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE
BLIND PIG PUB 32 St. Anne
111111
BLUE CHAIR CAFE 9524 76 Ave
514 7651
BUDDY'S 11725B Jasper Ave
BUDDY'S 11725B Jasper Ave
424-1111
CASINO EDMONTON
CASINO, YELLOWHEAD)
CASTLEROCK PUB

St. Albert Trail
CHRISTOPHER S PARTY PUB
20721 M. bourne Rd. West, 462
1111
CONVOCAION HALL Arts
Building U of A Campus, 432
1601
COSMOPOLITAN MUSIC
SOCIETY 8426 Gateway Blvd
514-1111
COWBOYS 10102 180 St. 481
5733
CROWN AND ANCHOR PUB
15277 Castle Downs Rd. 113 St.
472 764
DANTE'S BISTRO 11328 Stony
Pln n Rd 445 444
DECADANCE 10018 105 St. 990
111111
DRUID (Jasper Ave) 1110E
Jasper Ave, 454 9906
DUSTER S PUB 5412-118 Ave
514-1111
ESCAPE WEM Upper level 444
1111
FILTHY MCNASTY'S 10511-82
11111111
FIRST MENNONITE CHURCH
111111
FOUR ROOMS Edmonton Centre
111111
FUNKY BUDDHA (WHYTE
AVE) 12341-82 Ave 423-3676
GAS PUMP 10106 114 St. 406
514

GINGER SKY LOUNGE 1556-5
118 Ave. 913-4312-853-Junk

HALO 10538 Jasper Ave 473
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HAVANA CLUB 1020-103 St
282-2779

HOLY TRINITY 101 St 84 Ave
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HONEST MUR'S BAR AND GRILL 899-8 B2 Ave 403-6491

JAMMERS PUB 1194-127 Ave
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J AND W BAR 813-136 St, 4th
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MOST SERENE REPUBLIC

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MARCH 8

THE POWERPLANT

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MARCH 8

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Doug Riley, master of the Hammond B3, returns to Yardbird

by Eden Munro / eden@vancouverweekly.com

Doug Riley has played his Hammond B3 organ on a lot of recordings over the years. He was the man on three of Bob Seger's most famous albums (including *Night Moves*) and has lent his skills to recordings by Ray Charles, Ringo Starr and Gordon Lightfoot, among

For 20 years Riley made a living through recording and writing songs, but somewhere around 1990 he realized that he was missing out on the thing he most enjoyed: playing live in front of audiences.

While he didn't abandon recording completely, Riley did start turning down more sessions in favor of getting out in front of audiences. Some of the crowds were gathered for performances by Michael Burgess, with Riley acting as musical director for shows heavy on theatrical numbers, but his true love becomes apparent when he talks about playing with his Hammond B3 jazz quartet.

"It swings and it's very free," Riley explains. "There's lots of room to improvise, so every night is different. It's exciting because there's that sense of not knowing what's going to happen. It's not over-rehearsed because it's not rehearsed at all; we'll just go up and play."

IT'S NOT LIKE RILEY and his group are having an all-out free-for-all, though. Despite having plenty of opportunities to take the spotlight, each musi-

PREVIEW

FRI, FEB 24 AND SAT, FEB 25 (8 PM)
DOUG RILEY
YARDBIRD SUITE, \$18 - \$22

cian is ultimately out to serve the song. "One person will start something off and we'll develop it all together," Riley remarks. "The main thing is listening to what the others are doing so that what you do fits in and nothing overpowers anyone else."

While he's picked out a number of possible songs for the group to play, Riley admits that he'll only make the final decision as to what they'll do just before they step onto the stage.

"There's a tension involved with just going up there and then saying 'OK, we're going to do this,'" he says. "I have charts that I've sketched out for us to follow, but they're just lead sheets for the guys to follow so we have some kind of form to blow on."

"I like it to be exciting like that," Riley exclaims. "Any other way is just too predictable, and I like to put tension onto everybody because I know they're all capable. I know they'll all respond."

"The three guys that I'm playing with are all brilliant musicians in their own right and I'm expecting to have a lot of fun for the two nights there," he continues. "We should definitely get out there into space." ▽

Dust Poets spread out

by Eden Munro / eden@vancouverweekly.com

Most groups simply replace members as they move away, but The Dust Poets have found a way to overcome the logistical difficulties. The five Dust Poets started out together in Brandon, Manitoba, but three of them now call Toronto home, while mandolin player Corey Ticknor lives on the banks of the Bay of Fundy in New Brunswick.

"It makes it hard to rehearse," Ticknor admits, "but we played together so much back when we lived in Brandon that we got really tight and now we just throw a few days on the front of the tour to get together and rehearse and it all comes back really quick."

While it's not so difficult to get together for a few rehearsals, the recording process seems like it might be a little more complicated, but Ticknor says that there are advantages to being spread out across the country as well.

"It makes it a longer process, because we're not in each other's space as often, or for as long as we'd like," he says. "But at the same time it makes us really focus when we do get together."

Ticknor says that the group's rural outlook has been tempered with a lament for a landscape that is increasingly buried beneath a suburban sprawl of box stores.

"The theme of the album [the new *Lovesick Town*] is I really love my home town and I really hate my home town," he laughs, "and I really have to get out some times." ▽

PREVIEW

FRI, FEB 24 (8 PM)
DUST POETS
WITH JOEL FAFARD
FULL MOON FOLK CLUB, \$17




Top 10 Ringtones

1. **Grillz**
Nelly
2. **Check On It (Intro f. Slim Thug)**
Beyoncé
3. **Gold Digger**
Kanye West
4. **My Humps**
Black Eyed Peas
5. **Thunderstruck**
AC/DC
6. **Welcome 2 Detroit**
Trick Trick
7. **We Be Burnin'**
Sean Paul
8. **Don't Forget About Us**
Mariah Carey
9. **Candy Shop**
50 Cent
10. **Because I Got High**
Kanye West

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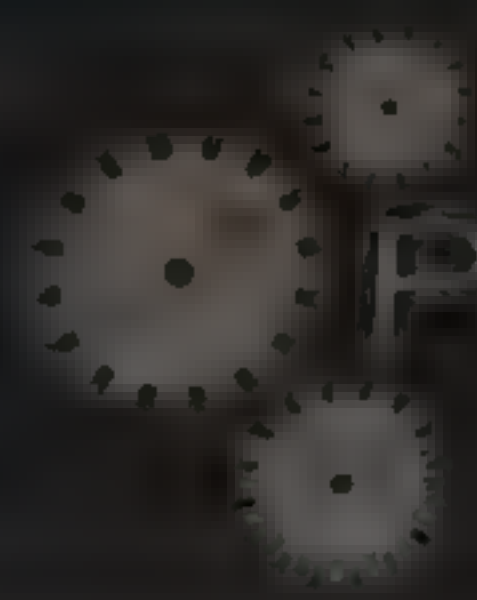
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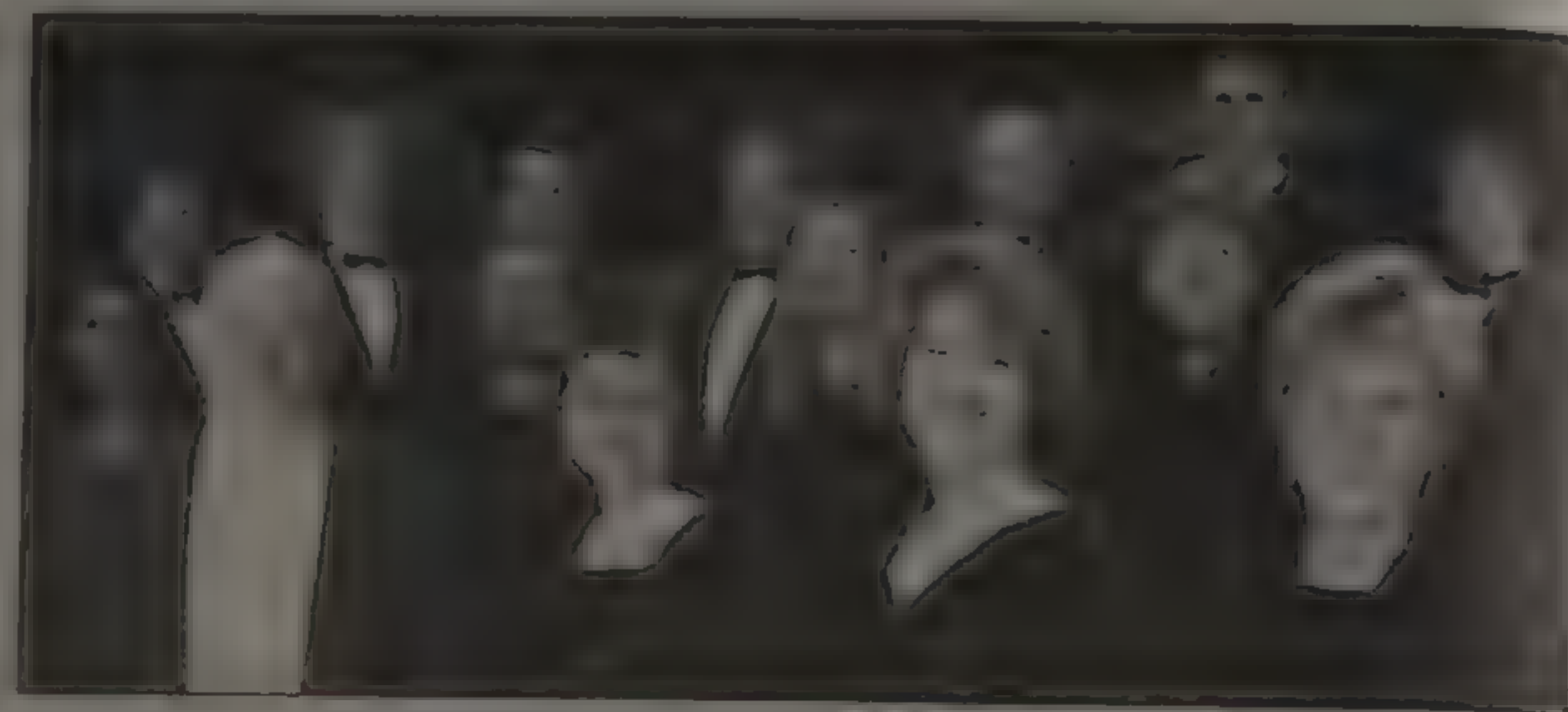
If five band members is good, 29 must be better—so goes the logic of McDades/Pro Coro team-up

SARAH CHAN / sarah@vnewweekly.com

Pro Coro Canada is ready to get in touch with the choir's lighter, collaborative side with this weekend's performance with Canadian roots sensation The McDades, an eclectic and talented folk group made up of three Edmontonian siblings and two musicians from Montreal.

After The McDades and Pro Coro had the chance to perform separately at the Winspear last year for the Rotary International Centennial Gala, they realized there was the potential for collaboration.

According to Pro Coro associate conductor Trent Worthington, when the



two groups sat down to discuss an approach to the concert, there was a point where they all questioned

whether or not such a pairing would really work—a doubt that vanished once they began exchanging ideas.

Worthington's excitement for The McDades' music and talent is all too evident as he enthuses about their live performance. "When The McDades put their musical brains to it, they can make quite unbelievable things happen to a typical folk song," he explains.

"What the band does musically with a melody is approached like a

PREVIEW | **SUN, FEB 26 (2 PM)**
PRO CORO, THE MCDADES
WITH CONDUCTOR TRENT WORTHINGTON
FRANCIS WINSPEAR CENTRE FOR MUSIC, \$25 - \$39

jazz ensemble would grab a melody and manipulate and improvise it. The construction that happens on the spot is just amazing. They never do the exact same thing twice—it's always a fresh approach."

Most of the pieces at the concert will be the McDades' original songs, which they are accustomed to performing live. Many of the favourites, however, have been re-thought and rearranged for the addition of choir.

Pairing a choir with a band of this kind is highly uncommon, Worthington says, with the fusion of classical choral influences in what is otherwise purely folk Celtic with an acoustic type of jazz influence.

With both groups lending their own valuable elements to the musical process, Sunday's duo performance is sure to be a hit. "We're practicing furiously and madly," Worthington admits, noting that his choir definitely welcomes the challenge. "Musicians enjoy a chance to try new things."

The collaboration will offer the chance for Pro Coro to sing choral music that is quite a departure from normal circumstances, but Edmonton's professional choir is up for the exciting challenge. And Edmontonians are in for a collaborative treat. **V**



STIRRING CULTURE



WILL ALSOP

Will Alsop is one of the most prominent architects of the United Kingdom. His practice is international in scope, guided by the principle that architecture is both vehicle and symbol of social change and renewal.

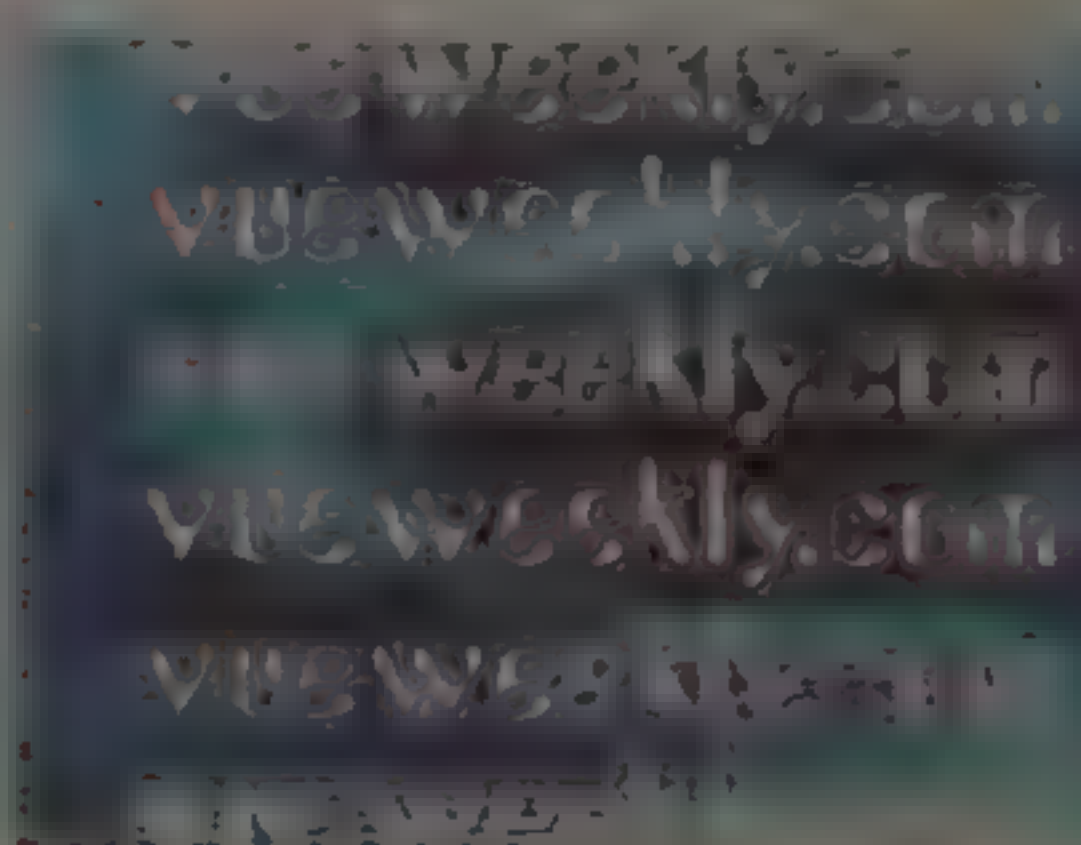
February 27, 2006

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will alsop is a professor at the Alberta College of Art & Design, a member of the Institute for the Creative Process, a former Founding Partner of the Institute for the Creative Process at ACAD and Stirring Culture.

ACAD





Betty Machete cuts like a knife

EDEN MUNRO / eden@vueweekly.com

Betty Machete is only four months old, but the band is already pushing their musical boundaries, conjuring up a jazzy, surf and indie-rock sound awash with energetic musical changeups.

Keyboardist Jet Vee says that the varying dynamics in the songs are intentional. "We're trying to do something a little more complex than the bands we've been in in the past," she says. "I get kind of bored of playing straight, so I like to throw in a bit of syncopation, mix things up."

While Vee has a definite vision for the band, the sound is also partly due to an organic combination of influences. With Vee coming from a folk-rock background and singer/guitarist Kelsey Thomson originally being a heavy-metal guy

"I guess this is the happy medium," laughs Vee.

Despite any musical differences, the band is bonded by a love for playing live, something that carries over into the recording process. "We don't want to let anybody down with an empty sound," says Vee. "So we just figure out what we're doing and lay it down pretty honestly."

Before they can hit the stage regularly, though, the band still needs to recruit a full-time drummer. They have some temporary help lined up, but they've been plagued by bad luck when it comes to filling the spot permanently.

"We've gone through 10 drummers now," Vee says, the frustration clear. "We go through them like Kleenex. We had a couple guys who just wandered off and a few that hated us."

"Originally Kelsey was going to be the drummer," she remembers. "But we were writing the songs and he was singing them and I was like, 'dude, you have to be on guitar and vocals. You're not allowed to be the drummer.' Which is unfortunate, because otherwise we'd have a drummer." ▽



Betty Machete

REVUE / WED, FEB 15 / MIKEY DREAD / SIDETRACK CAFÉ

Famed radio DJ and international champion of reggae Mikey Dread was in town last Wednesday to play the Sidetrack Café's 25th birthday celebration. Following Edmonton's perpetually tight reggae favorites Souljah Fyah, Dread's horn section proceeded to blow the roof off the soon-to-be-demolished Sidetrack. The no-smoking bylaw was quickly forgotten: it was hard to spot the source, but as the band took the stage more than a puff of marijuana smoke could be whiffed. Olfactory stimulation aside, the perfectly paced, slow skankin' Rhythms of Dread band provided the authentic Jamaican experience—dancing the night away in a tight, hot little room. —IRALEIGH ANDERSON / ira@vueweekly.com

saturday february 25, 2006

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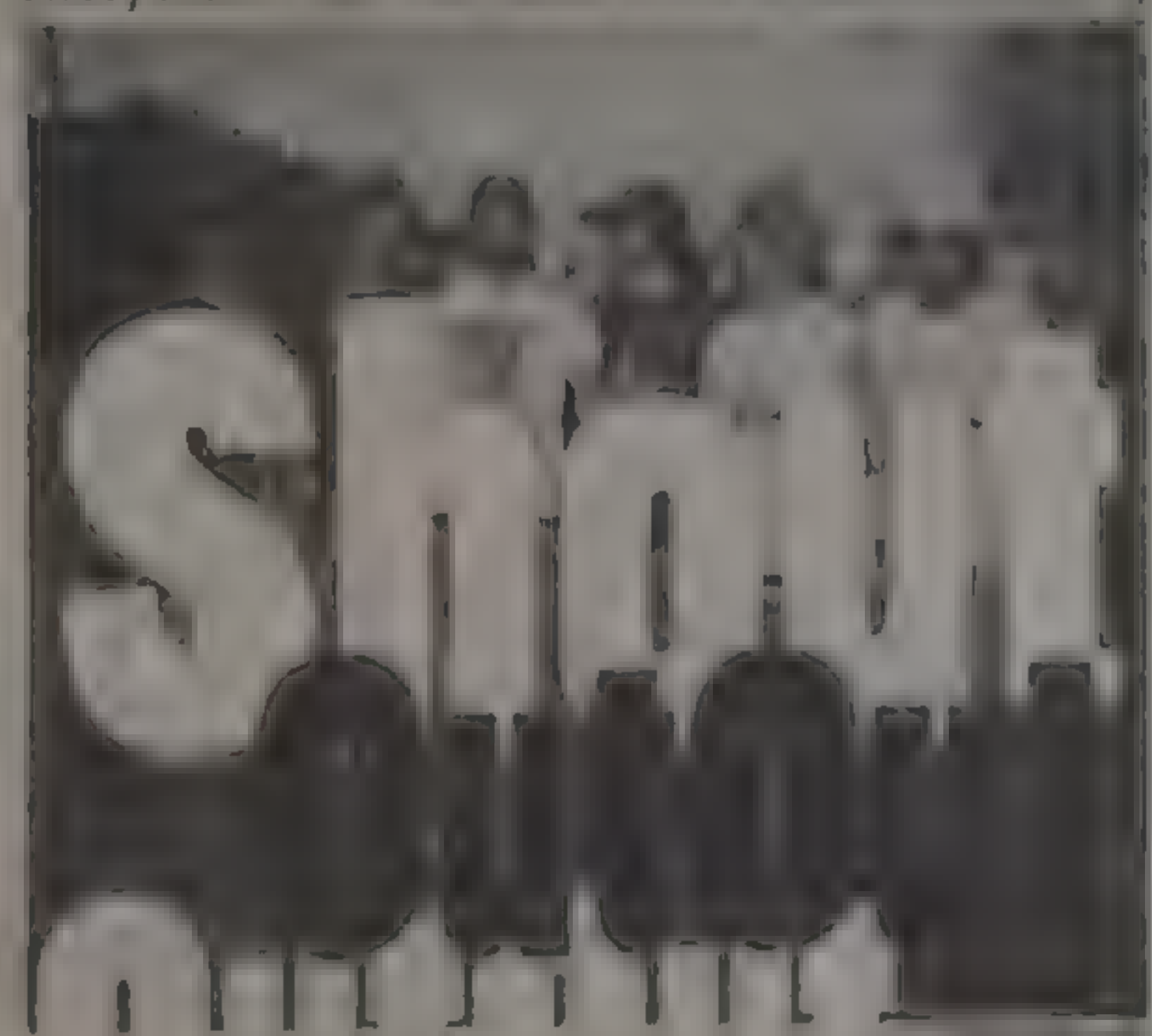
THE
MARBLE
INDEX

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FAT DAVE CRIME WAVE



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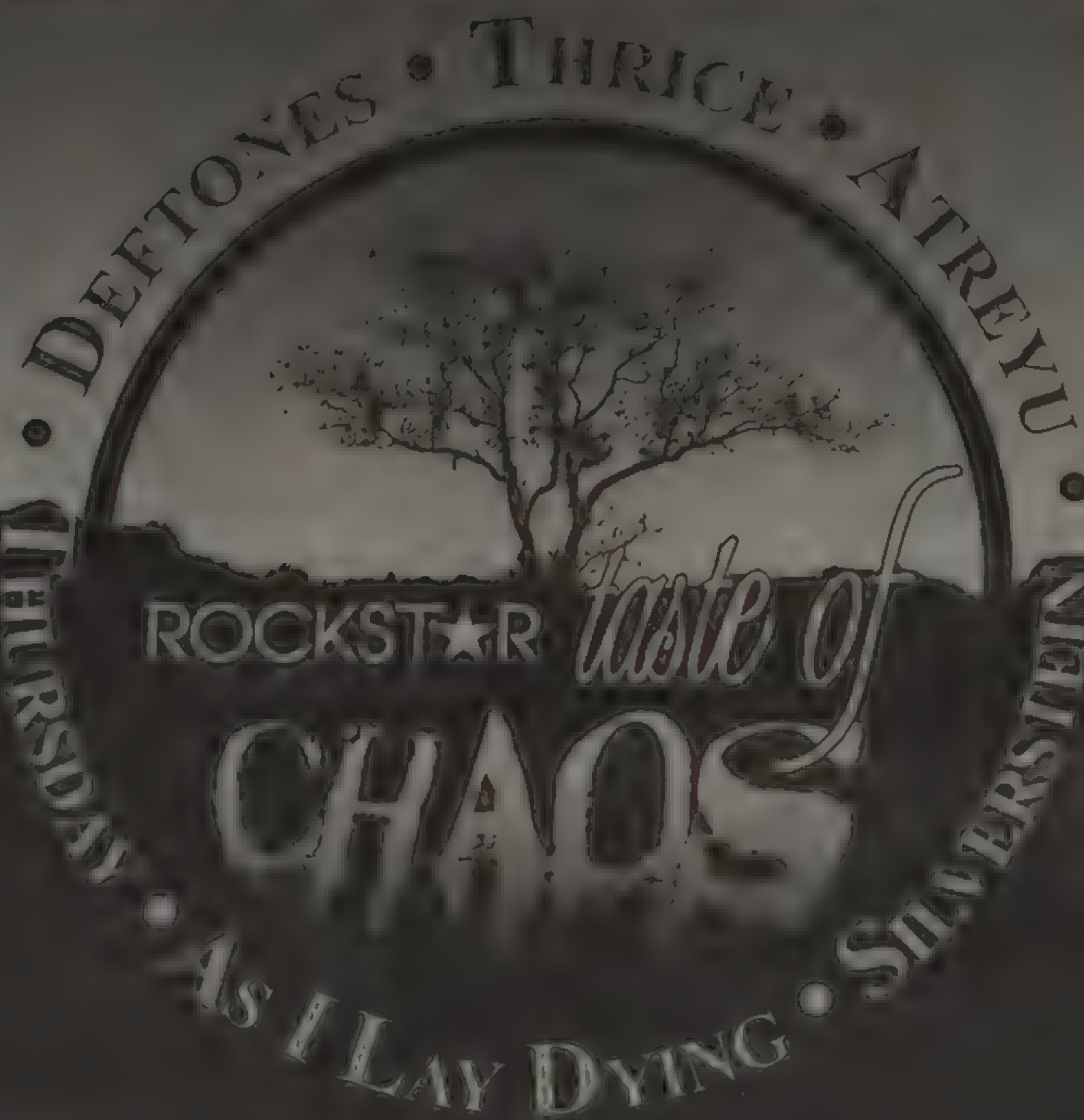


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This is just how we roll

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 34

THIS IS WHY Kaija and the rest of controller.controller are so happy to have released their new disc *X-Amounts*, as well as their previous release *History*, on smaller indie label Paper Bag Records. "The nice thing about a small label," says Kaija, "is they're content to let us do our own thing."

And controller.controller has been doing their own thing quite a bit lately. Quebec City was the last night of the eastern leg of their current tour, after which they'll have a week off before beginning the western part of their tour, with forays into the western United States before hitting Texas for the SXSW festival in March. Oh, and if that wasn't enough, they're off to England soon after.

Not surprisingly, Kaija is looking forward to the break. "I'm sick as a

dog," he says before a coughing fit leads me to ask if he'll be confined to bed rest for the whole week. "We're shooting a video actually, so it's not even really a break."

Kaija is not complaining, however. The band was recently nominated for an Independent Music Award, in the favourite group category, and their live shows continue to do well. "The reception everywhere is really good. We ended up playing a show right in the middle of that huge blizzard the east coast just had and we still sold out the club. It's all really exciting."

So controller.controller have no plans of stopping their merciless touring schedule anytime soon. Through sickness, sleet, and snow, Kaija doesn't see anywhere but up for the pulsing drum beats and wall-opping bass of their particular brand of post-punk. As he says, "This is just how we roll." ♡



REVUE / SAT, FEB 18 / YOU SAY PARTY! WE SAY DIE! / VELVET UNDERGROUND The world is ready for a dance-punk revolution, and bands like Vancouver's You Say Party! We Say Die! are leading the charge to the dance floor. While there's no shortage of synth-infused rock out there these days, it's bands like this who are using the fun combination to the best effect. Creating catchy and sexy tunes that hit you in the sneakers and keep rising up your legs to nestle in your crotch, the world will be powerless to resist their charms. It's time to get hot and heavy out there, boys and girls, so quit gazing at yer shoes and do something useful with them. —PHIL DUPERRON / phil@vuwweekly.com

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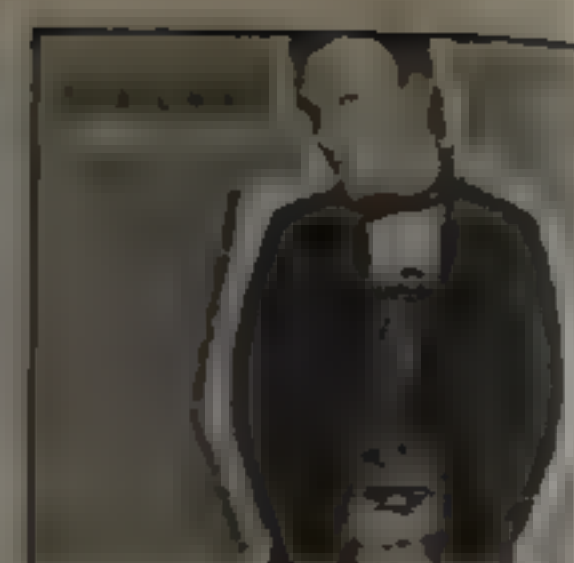
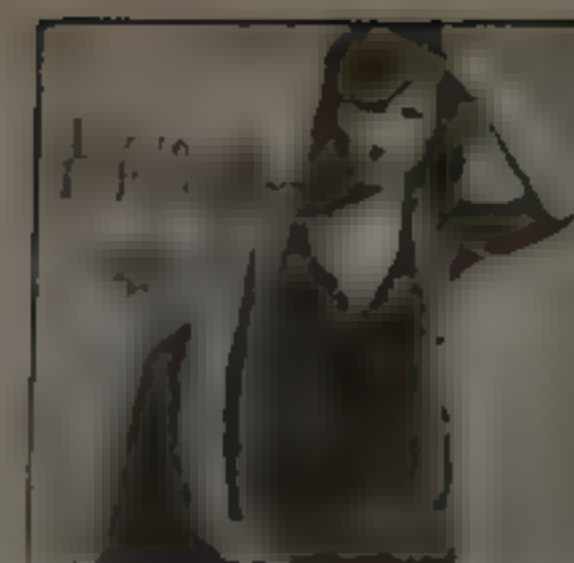
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ALBUM REVIEWS

NEW SOUNDS



KT TUNSTALL
EYE TO THE TELESCOPE
RELENTLESS

EDEN MUNRO / eden@vuweekly.com



THIS ROCKS

In a world where it's easy to download single songs rather than sitting down and spending the time to listen to an entire disc in the order that the artist intended, KT Tunstall's *Eye to the Telescope* is a testament to the slowly dying format of the album that begs to be taken in as whole.

The opening track, "Other Side of the World," gives the impression that Tunstall just might be another female songwriter specializing in airy tunes and pretty voices. That's not a cut towards the style, and the song itself is lovely, but there's definitely a familiar sound to it.

After that initial burst of pop, Tunstall eases the listener into something a little more energetic with "Another Place to Fall." The song still has a chorus that soars overhead, but the verses have a heavier, thumping rhythm.

It's on the third track, however, the Tunstall really starts to let loose. "Under the Weather" begins as a sweet acoustic tune, but then the music turns gritty and Tunstall's voice becomes a soul monster.

There's power in those vocal chords and she can tear apart the sweetness when she goes for it, like on the percussive grooves of "Black Horse and the Cherry Tree" and "Suddenly I See." Tunstall knows when to hold back, too, never over-singing on the relaxed, piano-led "Through the

Initial impressions are turned sideways as the album develops with each song until the whole has

become something that a single song could not be.

OUR MERCURY
FROM BELOW
SMALLMAN RECORDS

BRYAN CARROLL / bryan@vuweekly.com



THIS ROCKS

I'll admit it: I never wanted to like *Our Mercury*. I'm not a bad person, nor am I totally clueless, it's just that, well, I missed *Misdemeanor*.

When I was a kid, they were the coolest thing around, and when they went away and came back as something different, I fell into the "we fear change" mindset and tried my best not to give it a chance.

Well, I'm here to tell you that I was wrong, and I'm so, so sorry.

From Below, Our Mercury's new and much anticipated record for Winnipeg's Smallman Records, is excellent. The addition of Eric Budd on keyboards was a stroke of sheer brilliance, especially the piano-versus-organ feeling on tracks such as "Shawna Don't Wanna." Don't get the impression that *Our Mercury* has become some sort of wussy piano band all of a sudden, though: there's still plenty of Clash-style rocking to be found on this disc, too.

So while some days I might still yearn for some of the more humorous sentiments of *Misdemeanor*'s juvenilism (penis, penis, yeah!), I'll have to admit to myself that *Our Mercury*'s more sophisticated and mature sound far outpaces it. This record is brilliant, and we should be glad they came back home to Edmonton to help us create the amazing scene we've got right now, a scene they're poised to lead.

DIMITRI FROM PARIS
IN THE HOUSE OF LOVE
DEFEATED

MARC MORIN / marc@vuweekly.com



THIS ROCKS

I am not a good dancer. I like dancing, sure, but as I look around the room when getting my groove on at a club I always see at least one person who looks like a total idiot, and I hope too god I don't look as bad as him. This is about as much as I can hope for.

This isn't a big qualm for me, as dancing doesn't make up most of my daily routine, although Dimitri From Paris's new CD makes me wish otherwise. His very upbeat and romantic take at disco is a very serious one, and a lot of the music sounds straight from the era, featuring all the back-up singers, bongos, wood blocks, saxophones, and funky bass lines of a night at Studio 54.

This album also doesn't spare on the quantity either, being a two disc album that includes a bonus disc along with a very sexy poster of artwork actually made by Dimitri himself.

In the House of Love is very funky, sexy, classic, and will not disappoint anyone who is looking to get his or her groove on, so go out and buy it.

LIAM PRODIGY
BACK TO MINE
OMC

SHEENA ROSSITER / sheena@vuweekly.com



THIS ROCKS

Liam Howlett, the mastermind behind mid-'90s UK electro-punk group The Prodigy, returns with *Back to Mine*, a compilation of 16 personally selected tracks that would prove to be any DJ's ultimate set.

Tracks such as "Radio Babylon" and "I Chase the Devil" will sound familiar to fans of The Prodigy, as they have been remixed by the band in the past, while the retro groove of "Livin' Thing" and "Jolene" will excite the middle-aged before sending them back to their youth.

The tracks on *Back to Mine* appear to be very schizophrenic, offering samples from hip-hop's Public Enemy to rock's Public Image Limited to The Prodigy itself to country's original glamour girl herself, Dolly Parton.

But Howlett's keen ear makes all the diverse and eccentric sounds seem natural to the listener, and would keep any dance floor shaking all night long.

JACK JOHNSON AND FRIENDS
SING-A-LONGS AND LULLABIES FOR
THE FILM CURIOUS GEORGE
BLU-MUSIC

EDEN MUNRO / eden@vuweekly.com



THIS IS OK

It's hard not to like this album a little bit. It's the soundtrack to a movie about a monkey, which is cause for

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Bramwell Park discusses The Beatles' Abbey Road

RETRO | **DISTANT REPLAY**
distantreplay@vueweekly.com

celebration in itself, but the monkey in
is also Curious George, who
is a monkey without restraint. He
might as well be a rock star monkey.

Sure, the more you hear of Jack
Johnson's music, the easier it is to be
critical of his eternally laidback,
beach-bum sameness. Still, he does
write and play from his heart, and his
music is frivolous, sometimes, but not
stupid. His songs tend to be disarming
and they don't kill brain cells when
you hear them, and that's exactly why
this album is a good thing.

Sing-A-Longs proves there's
absolutely no reason why little kids
should be forced to suffer the trauma of
listening to music that's been dumbed
down beyond necessity. Johnson plays
every song here as though he's per-
forming for his regular audience. He
also pulls out a few well-chosen cov-
ers: The White Stripes' "We're Going to
Be Friends" turns out to be ideally suit-
ed to the album, and Ben Harper's
"With My Own Two Hands" is mutated
from a rallying cry into a lesson about
life (with the help of Harper himself).

Now if only some of those chil-
dren's performers would follow John-
son's lead.

TRAIN FOR ME, IT'S YOU

EDEN MUNRO / eden@vueweekly.com

I'll admit to being a big fan
of Train bassist Johnny Colt
from back when he was
wrestling the four strings
with The Black Crowes.

And, having no memory of a single
song by Train, I was somewhat opti-
mistic when I sat down with the band's
new album, their first featuring Colt.

Well, it took approximately two and
a half bars of the first song before the
utterly predictable and mediocre easy-
listening adult-contemporary lame-
ness that passes for music here put
me to sleep.

A second attempt at conquering the
album yielded similar results, except
that this time I managed to make it
through a song titled simply "Cab." It's
brilliant, with the singer assuming the
role of a cab driver, using his taxi as a
metaphor for life and love, singing a
lonesome tune with stunning lyrics
like "Sometimes I feel like I'm the only
cab on the road." Amazing. And the
bass playing is ... OK. At least as
much as it can be in an undemanding
format like this.

As for the rest of the album, it's just
watered-down soft-rock. The best
way to take this album in is by setting
an alarm and closing your eyes until
"Cab." Then you can marvel at Train's
ability to turn a common taxi into a
symbol for romance, before closing
your eyes again.

Sorry, Johnny, but you should have
hopped a different train. ▽

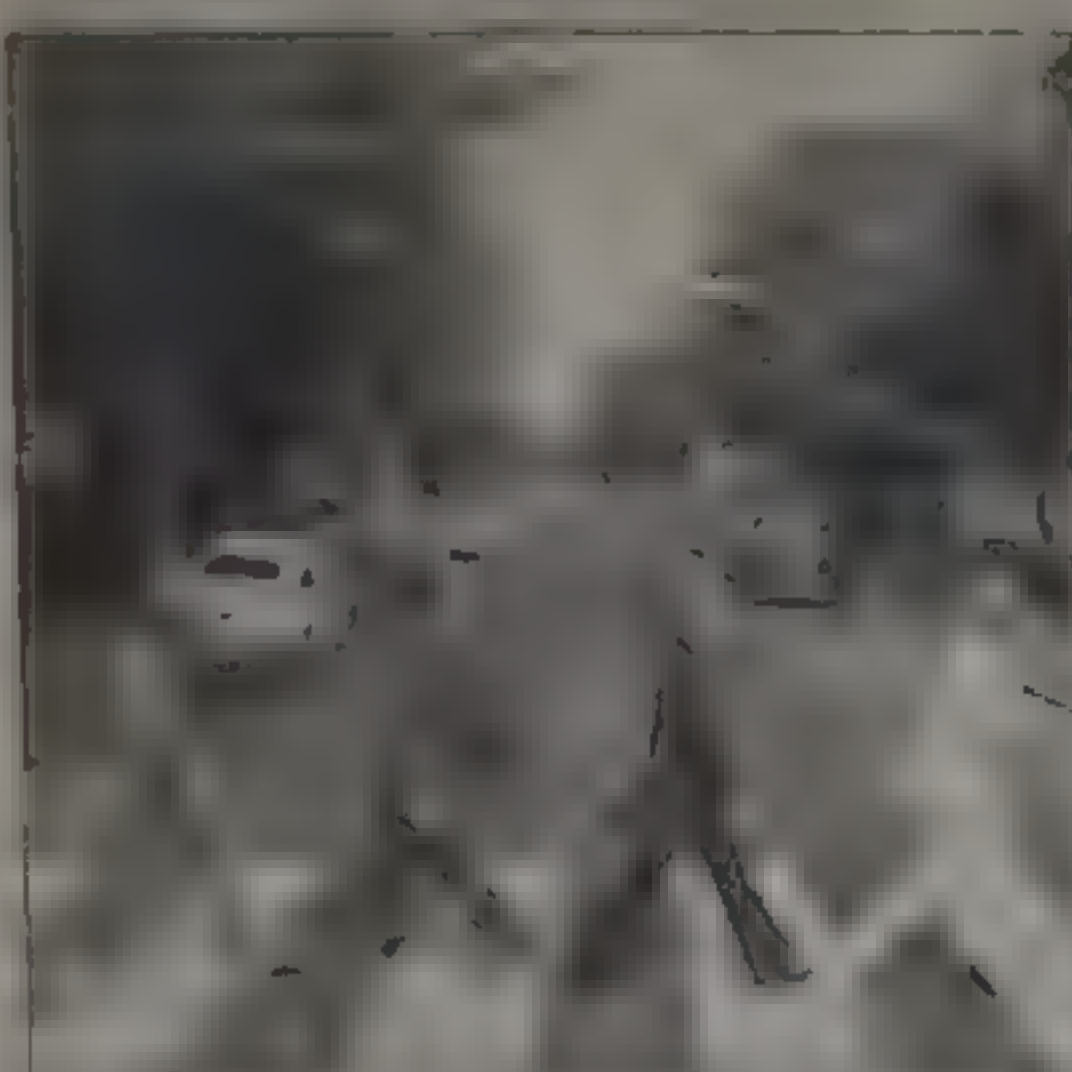
STEVEN SANDOR / steven@vueweekly.com

Distant Replay has been a fixture in
Vue Weekly for nearly a year and a
half, and in that time, The Beatles'
catalogue has steadily been exhaust-
ed as artists pick the albums that most
influenced their careers.

But, up to this point, no one has
selected *Abbey Road*, the album
named for the famous London studio
in which the band did most of their
recording. Edmonton's own Bramwell
Park got it out of the way this week.
For Park, *Abbey Road* was simply
inspirational.

"Well, after thinking this through,
I'd have to say The Beatles' entire col-
lection has been very influential on my
career as a musician," he says. "They
were so consistent, yet always rein-
venting themselves. They put them-
selves in a position that enabled them
to do whatever they wanted. I have
tremendous respect for those chaps.
But if I had to narrow it down to just
one album, I'd say *Abbey Road* has
been the most influential.

"Though perhaps not my favourite
Beatles album, depending on what day
you ask, *Abbey Road* was one of the
first albums I ever owned," he contin-
ues. "Of course, my parents raised me
on a healthy dose of the Fab Four, and I
could probably sing along to every
song before I even knew what I was
listening to. I always loved that partic-
ular album, with all its non-stop hit-
after-hit, hook-after-hook brilliance."



And it was the guitar work of the
late George Harrison on *Abbey Road*
that inspired a young Bramwell Park to
learn how to play rock 'n' roll.

"I think 'I Want You (She's So
Heavy)' was one of the first songs that
I ever learned on guitar, alongside the
Zeppelin standard, 'Stairway to Heav-
en,'" he explains. "The Beatles have
had a profound impact on me, and
without them, and great albums like
Abbey Road, I'd probably be dead in
some ditch, or, worse, tone deaf."

It's a good thing he isn't, though, or
else the world would have never had a
Bramwell & the Left Overs record,
which featured the talents of well-
admired Edmonton musicians Stephen
Tchir, Stephen Badach, Michelle
Sabourin and drummer Sean McIn-
tosh. The music features enough pop
sensitivity to appeal to the pop/rock
fan, but enough roots goodness to sat-
isfy the alt-country folk.

Currently, plans are in the works for
another Left Overs record, but for the
next few months the band is on hia-
tus. You can catch the Park and friends
again live this summer—they'll be
back in business when Park finishes a
gig playing drums on a cruise ship. ▽

HAIKU! | QUICK SPINS

WHITEY AND TB PLAYER
quickspins@vueweekly.com

WILLIAM HOOKER / LEE RANALDO THE CELESTIAL ANSWER XERIC

Slack percussive jazz
I know, dude! They're both legends!
It still sounds aimless

SERGIO MENDES TIMELESS CONCORD

Career revival
Using others' talents ... it's
Santana syndrome!

MAGNETA LANE DANCING WITH DAGGERS PAPER BAG

Nice sophomore disc
Ladies followed sage advice
"If it ain't broke, don't ..."

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4. Jenny Lewis & The Watson Twins - Rabbit Fur Coat (team love)
5. Elliott Brood - Ambassador (six shooter)
6. Beth Orton - Comfort For Strangers (emi)
7. Karla Anderson-The Embassy Sessions (indieclub)
8. Apple Monkeys - What Our People Say I Am, That's What I'm Not (downtown)
9. Sarah Harmer - I'm A Mountain (cold snap)
10. Jack Johnson & Friends - Curious George (brushfire)
11. Tom & Bonnie Prince Billy - The Grave And The Field (evercoat)
12. She Wants Revenge - She Wants Revenge (flawless)
13. Harry Manx - Manxas For Madmen (Jonny cat)
14. Bruce Cockburn - Speechless (suburban)
15. Colin Linden - Easin' Back To Tennessee (true north)
16. Gogol Bordello - Gypsy Punks (sideonedummy)
17. Clap Your Hands & Say Yeah - Clap Your Hands Say Yeah (cyt)
18. Robert Pollard - From A Compound Eye (merge)
19. The Ladies - They Mean Us (temporary residence)
20. Corb Lund-Hair in my eyes like a Highland Steer (stony plain)
21. You Say Party? We Say Die! - Hit The Floor! (round document)
22. Belle & Sebastian - The Life Pursuit (matador)
23. Candence Weapon - Breaking Kayfabe (upper class)
24. Wilco - Kicking Television (nonesuch)
25. In Flames - Come Clarity (ferret)
26. Colin James - Limelight (maple)
27. Never Ending White Lights - Act1 (maplenationwide)
28. Sufjan Stevens - Illinoise (asthmatic kitty)
29. Twin Fangs - Street Sweeper (rectangle)
30. Death Cab For Cutie - Plans (barsuk)

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EVENTS WEEKLY

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CLUBS/LECTURES

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL • 10000 100th St. • 100th Church, 83 Ave, 109 St (446-5461) • Monthly meeting • Tue, Feb. 28 (7pm)

BILL CLINTON-ON CANADA-U.S. RELATIONS Rexall Place (451-8000) • An evening with former President Bill Clinton as he discusses issues facing our world today including the critical issues that affect the Canadian-American relationship • Thu, Mar 9 (7pm) • \$86.25-\$230 at TicketMaster

BLACK HISTORY MONTH SPEAKER SERIES • Glenora Community Hall, 13536-109 Ave (439-2797) • Lecture with Rick Jamerson, President of the Black Pioneer Descendants Society • Tue, Feb. 28 (7:30pm)

BOREAL ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVISM 7, 6328A-104 St. every Thu (6:30-8:30) • Organic Roots, 8225-122 St. every third Thu (6:30pm)

CANADIAN LANDMINE AWARENESS WEEK-LECTURES www.minelactioncanada.org, edmonton@dangermines.ca • **Words On Weapons** Discussion on arms control and the movement to ban landmines, Mon, Feb 27 • **Four Perspectives From The Effort To Ban Landmines**; Panel discussion • Wed, Mar 1

CONVERSATION CAFE Unity of Edmonton Church, 13212-106 Ave • Meeting presented by Rev Yvonne Racine • Every Tue (1-3pm)

FAVA'S MONTHLY WRITER'S CIRCLE Exhibition Suite (429-1671) • Meeting on the first Tue ea. month (7-9pm), to discuss, share and comment on work in progress, common challenges and to hear from special guests

FROM FRIENDS TO ENEMIES • Discussion on good and bad music for film • Mar. 6 • Tickets available at FAVA

FLAWLESS FELLATIO Manulife Place 10180-101 St. Executive Centre Conference Room, Suite 1000, 10th Fl. www.inneroracle.com (409-1149) • Seminar presented by Bobbi Stobart RN • Thu, Feb. 23 and Tue, Feb. 26 (7pm-9:15pm) • \$35

JANE AUSTEN SOCIETY Edmonton Room, Stanley A. Milner Library (437-4130) • Happy Endings: The film clips Beatrice Neary presents conclusions to the romances between heroine and hero in film versions of the Jane Austen novels • Sat, Feb. 25 (2-4pm) • Free

SHRIMP THROUGH THE CENTINIONS • **HISTORY OF CULTURE** Star of the North Retreat Centre, 3A St. • **Shrimp Through the Centinions** • Facilitated by David Goa • Feb. 23, Mar. 16 (8pm) • \$84 (series); \$20 (session) • Pre-register

OUR NORTH AMERICA: FROM TURTLE ISLAND TO THE SECURITY AND PROSPERITY PARTNERSHIP Tory Bldg basement, Rm 95, U of A • Tory Bldg, Basement, Room 95 • Lecture on *Canada-Mexico Relations: A Contemporary Balance*, featuring speakers Fred Judson, Athanasios Hristovoulos • Mar. 9 (3:30-5pm)

PHILOSOPHERS CAFE Stanley A. Milner Library basement, Edmonton Room, 7 Sir Winston Churchill Sq (492-0448) • **Words, Words, Words - What's Shakespeare Talking About?** with Dr Jonathan Hart • Sat, Mar. 4 (2-3:30pm)

PLANET SIMPSON: CHRIS TURNER Royal Alberta Museum, 12845-102 Ave (426-4985/486-0938) • Learn how a TV show documented and defined an entire era • Mar. 1 (6pm door) • \$20 (proceeds to WINGS)

ROMANCE WRITERS OF EDMONTON Grant McEwan, Rm 5-238, www.romancewritersedmonton.com • First and third Thu ea. Month (7-9:30pm)

SENIORS UNITED NOW Royal Canadian Legion, 8 Tache Street, St. Albert (449-1816) • Meeting, featuring speaker Laura Pawlchik from Alberta Senior Services • Mon, Feb. 27 (1:30pm)

SHARP STYL • **SACRED HARBOR** • **SUNDAY OF A KING** • 112 St, 83 Ave, Rm 2-28, brimillen@ualberta.ca • Sing four part folk hymns from the American South, no religious affiliation • Every Tue (5-7pm)

TOASTMASTERS • **Norwood Toastmasters Club** 11150-82 St (430-8774) Learn public speaking and communication skills in an encouraging, supportive and friendly environment, every Thu (8:10pm) • **N'Orators Toastmasters Club** 11910-40 St (476-6963) Learn public speaking/leadership skills, every Wed (7-9pm)

TOURETTE SYNDROME FOUNDATION Academy of King Edward, 6525-101 St (1-868-824-9764) • Support meeting to provide support for parents of children with TS • First Wed ea month (7:30pm)

VIGIL TO STOP PRIVATIZATION OF MEDICARE Alberta Legislature • Featuring speakers and music, Thu, Feb. 23 (12:15 noon) • Mon, Feb. 27 (7:15pm) • Wed, Mar. 1 (12:15 noon) • Mon, Mar. 6 (7:15pm) • Wed, Mar. 8 (12:15 noon)

WASKANEGAN TRAIL ASSOCIATION (440-1146) • Free guided hike/ski, approx. 11km at Strathcona Wilderness Centre • Meet at MacDonald's at Capilano Mall, 55 St, 101 Ave • Feb. 25

WOMEN'S HEALING CIRCLE Still Point, 110, 10350-124 St (452-5000) • With Marianne Peters • Unit Mar. 21 (7-9:30pm) • \$10 (evening)

QUEER LISTINGS

AGAPE Faculty of Education, U of A Campus • Sex, sexual, gender, identity, community, culture, politics, religion • Contact Dr. Andre Grace (andre.grace@ualberta.ca) for info

BISEXUAL WOMEN'S COFFEE GROUP bwcottfegroup@yahoo.ca • Social group for bisexual and lesbian women • Second Wed each month (7:30pm)

BOOTS AND SADDLES 10242-106 St (423-5014) • Large tavern with pool tables, restaurant, shows • Members only

BUDDY'S NITE CLUB 11725 Jasper Ave (488-6636) • Open daily 9-3, Fri 8-3 • Mon: Amateur strip contest (12:30); DJ Alvaro, Ashley Love • Tue: Free pool, Malebox, DJ Arrowchaser • Wed: Gurlz Gone Wild Midnite with DJ Eddy Toonflash, Mia Fellow, Ashley Love, Yohiko Oh-no, guests • Thu: Wet Undies Contest (12:30) with DJ Squiggles, Yohiko Oh-no • Fri: DJ Alvaro dance party, male strippers • Sat: Theme parties, leather/fetish dungeon, free pool, pool tournament, DJ Arrowchaser • Sun: Stardust Lounge with Mz Brance and Mz Vanity Fair (11pm), DJ Eddy Toonflash

DOWN UNDER MENS BATH HOUSE 12224 Jasper Ave (482-7960) • Open 24/7 • www.gayedmonton.com

EDMONTON RAINBOW BUSINESS ASSOCIATION www.edmontonrba.org • Monthly after business mixer • Network and share contacts in the GLBT business community • Second Wed ea month

HIV NETWORK OF EDMONTON SOCIETY 300, 11456-Jasper Ave (488-5742) or contact7@hivedmonton.com • Programs and support services for people affected and infected by HIV/AIDS and related illnesses. Counselling, referrals support groups, harm reduction, education, advocacy and public awareness campaigns

INSIDE/OUT U of A Campus • Campus-based organization for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans-identified and queer (LGBTQ) faculty, graduate student, academic, straight allies and support staff • Third Thu each month (fall/winter terms) • Speakers Series • Contact Kris (kwells@ualberta.ca)

LIVING POSITIVE 404, 10408-124 St. www.edmlivingpositive.ca (1-877-975-9448/488-5768) • Providing confidential peer support to people living with HIV • Every Tue (7-9pm) • Support group • Daily drop-in, peer counselling

MADELINE SANAM FOUNDATION Faculté St. Jean, 8406 Marie-Anne Gaboury (81 St) Rm 3-18 (490-7332) • Program for HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment and harm reduction in French, English and other African languages • Every 3rd and 4th Sat (8am-5pm) • Free (member)/\$10 (membership) • Pre-register

MAKING WAVES • **SWIMMING CLUB** • www.geocities.com/makingwaves_edm • Recreational and competitive swimming with coaching, beginners encouraged to participate. Socializing after practices • Every Tue and Thu

PRIDE CENTRE OF EDMONTON 10010-109 St (488-3234) • Open 10am-10pm • Open 10am-10pm • GLBT and Supporters Community and Resource Centre • Drop-in, use the library, TV room, community access computers. Join a group or take part in special programming • Bears Movie Night: Bears Club: last Sun ea month (1-6pm, TV room) • Trans Education/Support Group: Support and education for transsexual, transgendered, intersexed, two-spirited and questioning individuals, first, third, last Sun ea month (2-4pm) • Sunday Night Mens Discussion Group: Mens social and discussion group; every Sun (7pm), Rob Wells at robwells780@hotmail.com • Monday Movie Night: Movie nights with themed movies and discussion afterwards, every Mon • Womens Spirituality Group: Drumming circle facilitated by Kwartz; 2nd Tue ea month (7pm, TV room) • Bisexual Discussion Group: Mixed social and discussion group drop-in, facilitated by Vanessa edmbi-group@yahoo.com, first, third Tue ea month (7pm Meeting Room A) • Community Potluck Dinner: Second Mon ea month (7-9pm) • Meditation Circle: Drop-in, facilitated by Hanne Csarri, hanne@dyerwind.com; 1st/3rd Wed ea month, Meeting Room A, \$5 • The HIV Positive Gay Men's Group: Drop-in caring circle facilitated by Mark (HIV Outreach); every Thu (1-4pm, 7-9pm) • Youth Understanding Youth: Youth support and social group, every Sat (7-9pm), yuy@shaw.ca; www.members.shaw.ca/yuy • Womenspace: 1st Sat ea month (10am-1pm) • Prime Timers: Monthly member meetings

PRISM BAR AND GRILL 10524-101 St, back entrance (990-0038) • Lesbian and gay bar/restaurant

THE ROOST 10345-104 St (426-3150) • Open Sun-Thu 8pm-3am, Fri-Sat 8pm-4am • Wed: Amateur strip with Weene Luv, Sticky Vicky, DJ Alvaro • Thu: Rotating shows: Sticky's open stage and the Weakest Link game second and last Thu with DJ Jazzy • Fri: Upstairs: Euro Blitz: New European music with DJ Outlaw Downstairs: DJ Jazzy • Sat: Every Sat like new years: Upstairs: Monthly theme parties with DJ Jazzy: Downstairs: New music with DJ Dan and Mike • Long weekend Sundays: Betty Ford Hangover Clinic Show: Every long weekend with DJ Jazzy • Tue-Thu \$1 (member)/\$4 (non-member), Fri-Sat \$4 (member)/\$6 (non-member), Sun \$2

STEAMWORKS 11745 Jasper Ave (451-5554) • Steam baths open daily (24hrs)

WOODY'S 11723 Jasper Ave (488-6557) • Open Daily (noon) • Sat-Wed: With Annie and Tizzy (7-12pm) • Tue, Sat-Sun: Pool tournaments

SPECIAL EVENTS

BAD ART FOR BAD PEOPLE Avenue Skatpark, 9030-118 Ave (477-2143) • Twenty-year retrospective of posters and pin-up art from Edmonton and Vancouver's punk scene from the '80's-'90's by Bob Proctor • Fri, Feb. 24 (7:30pm door 8:30pm bands) • \$5

BEING CARIBOU Pavilion Centrale, Main Bldg, faculté St. Jean 6406 Marie-Anne Gaboury • Featuring an opening address by Heena Vash followed by the film *Being Caribou* and an address (in French) by Denis Gignac • Thu, Feb. 23 (7:15pm doors, 7:30pm start) • Donation

BLACK HISTORY MONTH AWARDS BANQUET • cedmonton.org (425-0319) • Chateau Louis Conference Centre • Sat, Mar. 4 (6:30pm-1:30am) • \$40 (adult); \$35 (child); \$20 (student)

CANADIAN LANDMINE AWARENESS WEEK • [minelactioncanada.org](http://www.minelactioncanada.org), Feb. 27-Mar. 5 • **A Minefield in My Neighborhood**: McIntyre Park, 103 St, 83 Ave, a simulated minefield, and more, Sat, Feb. 25 (10am-2pm) • **Drums Film**

Screening Stanley A. Milner Library Theatre, documentary, Thu, Mar. 2 (7pm) • **Spotlight On A Massacre** Black Dog Freehouse, Underdog (downstairs) 10 short films; Fri, Mar. 3 (7pm); free

IRISH FILM FESTIVAL Metro Cinema, Chapel Theatre, 3000 101A Ave (436-3219) • Presented by the Celtic Cultural Association of Alberta • Mar. 3-5 • Tickets available by calling 436-3219, or at the door

LOVE STYLES-SPRING FEVER 10708-124 St (453-2440) • Theatre Network's fashion fundraiser presenting a night of music and style with music by Andrea House and Chris Smith choreography/environments by Henry and Irving, hair and makeup by Propaganda • Mar. 1 (7pm) • \$20

MARIA DUNN BENEFIT FOR CHOICE Cosmopolitan My Society, 8426 Gateway Blvd (425-1757) • Folk music by Maria Dunn, and a live and silent auction • Sat, Feb. 25 (8pm) • \$25 (adv) at TIX on the Square, proceeds will support sexual health education and youth programs of Planned Parenthood Edmonton

MURDER MYSTERY: SWEET REVENGE Prosper Place Clubhouse, 2nd Fl, 10584-108 St (426-7861) • Murder mystery dinner theatre • Thu, Feb. 23 (6pm dinner, 7pm show) • \$22 (adv)/\$25 (door)

OCEAN OF LIGHT CHORALE Stencil Hall, Taylor University College, 11525-23 Ave (448-1505/481-6977) • Fundraiser gala and concert featuring various choirs, Pillars of Peace, and a presentation by Memunatu Dura Kamara • Sat, Feb. 25 (7pm) • \$10/\$25 (family) proceeds go towards the Alberta Canada Primary School in Sierra Leone

ONE Unity Church of Edmonton, 132 St, 106 Ave (913-6466) • Movie presented by Unity of Edmonton • Fri, Feb. 24 (7pm) Sun, Feb. 26 (1pm), Mar. 5 (1pm) • \$12

PLANET IN FOCUS FILM FESTIVAL Royal Alberta Museum Theatre (453-9100) • International environmental film and video festival • Feb. 25-26 • \$8 and \$6

RUSSIAN WINTER FESTIVAL Woodcroft Community Hall 13915-115 Ave (240-5886) • Russian traditional food, entertainment, outdoor contests, and a display of Russian folk objects • Sun, Feb. 26 (1-5pm) • Free

SACRED STORY FESTIVAL Haar Theatre, MacEwan College, 10045-155 St (481-84000) • Stories and mythology of diverse cultures and religions featuring a 50-voice choir Chinese dancing, and an audiovisual presentation • Sat, Feb. 25 (7pm) • \$11 (adult)/\$8 (child/senior)

KARAOKE

AVENUE PIZZA 8519-112 St (432-0536) • Every Thu (9:30pm)

B-STREET 11818-111 Ave (414-0545) • Every Wed-Sun (9pm) with Brad Scott

BANKER'S PUB 16753-100 St (406-5440) • Every Fri (9pm-1am) • Every Sun (8pm-midnight); with Off-Key Entertainment

BLIND PIG PUB AND GRILL 32 St, Anne Street, St. Albert 418-6332 • Every Thu • Every Wed. name that tune

CAMELOT SPORTS BAR 10231-95 St (425-4298) • Every Sun (8pm-12). Hosted by Jeannie

CHRISTOPHER'S PARTY PUB 37 Millbourne Rd • Every Tue (8pm); with Sonia Prosound

DOYLE'S PUB 2619-151 Ave (473-1961) • Every Fri/Sat (9:30pm)

ECCO PUB 9605-66 Ave • Every Mon (9pm); with Sonia, Prosound Productions

FRANCO'S 14059 Victoria Trail (478-4636) • Every Thu (8-12) Fri-Sat (10pm-2:30am); with Debra-Fae

FUNKY BUDDHA ON WHYTE AVE 10341-82 Ave (433-9676) • Every Sun: Karaoke Night

GAS PUMP 10166-114 St (488-4841) • Every Tue/Wed (9pm)

HOLIDAY INN 4520-76 Ave • Every Thu (8:30pm); with Prosound Productions

JAMMERS PUB 11948-127 Ave (451-8779) • Every Mon (7-11pm) hosted by Peggy Sue

LAKEVIEW PUB 18, 9104-179 Ave • Every Sat (9pm-1am) with Off-Key Entertainment

MOJO'S Best Western Hotel, Fort Saskatchewan • Every Fri (9:30pm); with Sonia, Prosound Productions

O'CONNORS IRISH PUB 9013-88 Ave (469-8165) • Every Thu (9pm-1am)

PICARDS PUB 10725-104 Ave (428-4386) • Every Fri (4pm) hosted by Chris

ROSARIO KARAOKE CENTRAL 11715-108 Ave (447-4727) • Nightly (9:30pm); with Dave and Ed

ROSE AND CROWN 10235-101 St • Every Sun (9pm); with Sonia Prosound Productions

ROSIE'S BAR AND GRILL • Downtown, 10604-101 St (423-3499), every Mon-Sat (9pm); Sun (7pm); with Ruth • Highstreet, 10315-124 St (482-1600); daily (9:30pm) • Old Strathcona, 10475-80 Ave (439-7211); every Thu-Sat (9:30pm-1:30am) • 99 St, 63 Ave; every Thu-Sat (9pm-1am); with Off Key Entertainment

SANTANA'S • Every Wed (9pm-2am)

SPORTSWORLD • **INLINE & ROLLER SKATING DISCO** 13710-104 St (472-6336) • Every Tues, Fri-Sat (7pm-midnight), Sat-Sun (1-5pm)

T. B'S PUB 62 St, Stony Plain Rd (443-2621) • Every Fri-Sat (9pm-2am); with Jeannie; games and prizes

TODAY'S 5224-86 St (465-6223) • Every Fri/Sat (9pm-1am)

WHISTLE STOP PUB 24 Ave, 132 St (451-5505) • Every Sat (10:30pm-2am)

WINSTONS PUB 9018-132 Ave (457-4883) • Every Fri/Sat (9pm-1am)

WOODY'S 11723 Jasper Ave (488-6557) • Open Daily (noon) • Every Sat-Wed (7pm-midnight); with Annie and Tizzy

YESTERDAY'S 205 Carnegie Dr, St. Albert (459-0295) • Every Tue (9pm-1am); Off-Key Entertainment with Nicole

ARIES (MAR 21 - APR 19)

After viewing Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in 1662, diarist Samuel Pepys called it "the most stupid, ridiculous play I ever saw in my life." French philosopher Voltaire had an equally dim view of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. "One would imagine this piece to be the work of a drunken savage," he wrote in 1768. Pepys's and Voltaire's opinions of the Bard ultimately became a minority view, of course. In the coming months, I predict there will be a similar evolution in the consensus about certain events of your own past. Both you and others will come to think highly of things once considered worthless or aberrant. Redemption begins now.

TAURUS (APR 20 - MAY 20)

To celebrate this royal phase of your astrological cycle, I would love to create a "Master of the Universe" crown for you to wear, at least in your imagination. Since I'd like it to conform to your exact needs and specifications, I'm soliciting your input. Please visualize in great detail the kind of regal headpiece you want, then communicate a vision of it to me telepathically. When it's done, I will set it on your head in a dream, and ask you to not take it off for five days and five nights.

GEMINI (MAY 21 - JUN 20)

I advise you not to take any of the following actions in the coming week: getting a vanity license plate that says 2GD4U or SUX2BU; pretending you know stuff you

don't; doing anything that will later require you to tell someone, "I can explain everything"; getting cosmetic surgery that makes you resemble your favorite celebrity; cleverly mocking people who haven't had the same luck and privileges you've had. On the other hand, I do recommend that you engage in actions like the following: giving theatre tickets to a homeless vagabond; doing a day-long impersonation of the person you want to become; tapping into your talent for healing mischief as you comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable; buying yourself a gift that will compel you to stretch your capacities; doing a storytelling performance for the people at an old folks' home; climbing a tree and singing songs that inspire you to move more rapidly toward the future.

CANCER (JUN 21 - JUL 22)

It's official. The National Climatic Data Center has confirmed that the weather went crazy in the US last year. From Fresno's 21 consecutive days of near-40C temperatures to record rainfall in Las Vegas, Wichita, and Pensacola, extreme conditions became commonplace. For you, Cancerian, the coming weeks will have a certain metaphorical resemblance to last year's profusion of weather anomalies. For instance, you can expect events that are akin to hailstorms from sunny skies and triple rainbows at dawn. But that won't be a problem as long as you vow to be intrigued and entertained, not thrown off course, by the interesting outbreaks of wild phenomena.

LEO (JUL 23 - AUG 22)

"Human beings are often unable to receive because we do not know what to ask for," writes Malidoma Some in his book *Of Water and the Spirit*. "We some-

times can't get what we need because we do not know what we want." Your task in the coming week, Leo, is to make sure you don't fit his description. How? Devote yourself to the glorious quest of decoding your most fundamental riddle: What is it you want more than anything else? Once you know, take a pledge to put that desire at the center of your life.

VIRGO (AUG 23 - SEP 22)

It will be a rather animalistic week, Virgo—or at least it *should* be. I suggest that you learn to feel more trust in your primal instincts; find out more about the part of you that doesn't use words. If you've got the luxury to experiment, see what it's like when you give your inner beast permission to express all of its creativity. The coming days will also be prime time to befriend lone wolves, horse around with wise old owls, welcome back lost sheep, play possum with jackasses, and flirt with sacred cows.

LIBRA (SEP 23 - OCT 22)

Indian director T Rajeev is in the early stages of planning his 11th film. It will be a story about Nobel Peace Prize-winner Mother Teresa. Among the small group of actresses he's considering to play the title role is none other than the American celebrity Paris Hilton. Apparently Rajeev can sense something in Hilton that is invisible to many of the rest of us. I urge you to be like him in the coming days. Be on the lookout to find value in things that no one else esteems. Find the hidden beauty that everybody has missed. Hunt for riches in the least likely places.

SCORPIO (OCT 23 - NOV 21)

I swear the strange woman standing near me at LA's Getty Museum was having an

erotic experience as she gazed upon van Gogh's *Irises*. She wasn't touching herself, nor was anyone else. But she was apparently experiencing waves of convulsive delight, as suggested by her rapid breathing, shivering muscles, fluttering eyelids, and sweaty forehead. Fifteen minutes later, I saw her again in front of Jean-Honoré Fragonard's *The Fountain of Love*. She was only slightly more composed. In a friendly voice, I said, "This stuff really moves you, doesn't it?" "Oh, yeah," she replied, "I've not only learned how to make love with actual flowers and clouds and fountains, I can even make love with paintings of them." Your assignment in the coming weeks, Scorpio, is to take a page from this woman's *Kama Sutra*: Figure out how to achieve rapturous communion with absolutely everything.

SAGITTARIUS (NOV 22 - DEC 21)

"They say a thing is holy if it makes you hold your tongue," muses a character in John Crowley's fantasy novel *Engine Summer*, speaking of the difference between his culture and another. "But we say a thing is holy if it makes you laugh." Let this be a seed thought as you re-evaluate and take inventory of what constitutes holiness for you, Sagittarius. According to my reading of the astrological omens, you will thrive if you spend quality time in sacred space seeking out uncanny experiences that kindle feelings of adoration and awe and amusement.

CAPRICORN (DEC 22 - JAN 19)

You will soon experience an upsurge in brainpower—perhaps as much as a 10-point increase in your IQ. I believe the events that heighten your intelligence will involve you doing something brave and resourceful. It's possible, for

instance, that you'll dive into a frigid river to save a drowning child or race into a burning building to rescue a beloved animal. Or perhaps your courage will be more subtly expressed: you will offer forgiveness to someone who has wronged or you will speak the difficult but necessary words that everyone has been afraid to articulate.

AQUARIUS (JAN 20 - FEB 18)

I'm not necessarily advising you to vent your frustrations by going out after midnight and filling up random strangers' mailboxes with ice cream. Nor do I suggest that you express any of your itchy, inarticulate emotions by using felt-tip markers to scrawl "The people in this place eat kittens" on the wall of an institution that messed with you. Both of those actions might get you arrested, and the proper way to channel your angst is not to do something that sabotages you but rather that elevates and enlightens you. So please figure out an ingenious, constructive way to get your dark yayas out.

PISCES (FEB 19 - MAR 20)

Of all the arguments made in favor of getting regular exercise, I rarely hear the one that's most important to me: do it because it strengthens and tones the power of your will. When you get used to rousing yourself out of your physical inertia, the habit carries over into the mental and spiritual sphere. You find it easier to force yourself out of your comfort zones and push toward the next frontier. You're less likely to procrastinate and accept mediocrity, and you actually enjoy challenging yourself with worthy goals that require strenuous effort. It's now the will-building season for you, Pisces. You know what to do. ♥

ADS! CLASSIFIEDS

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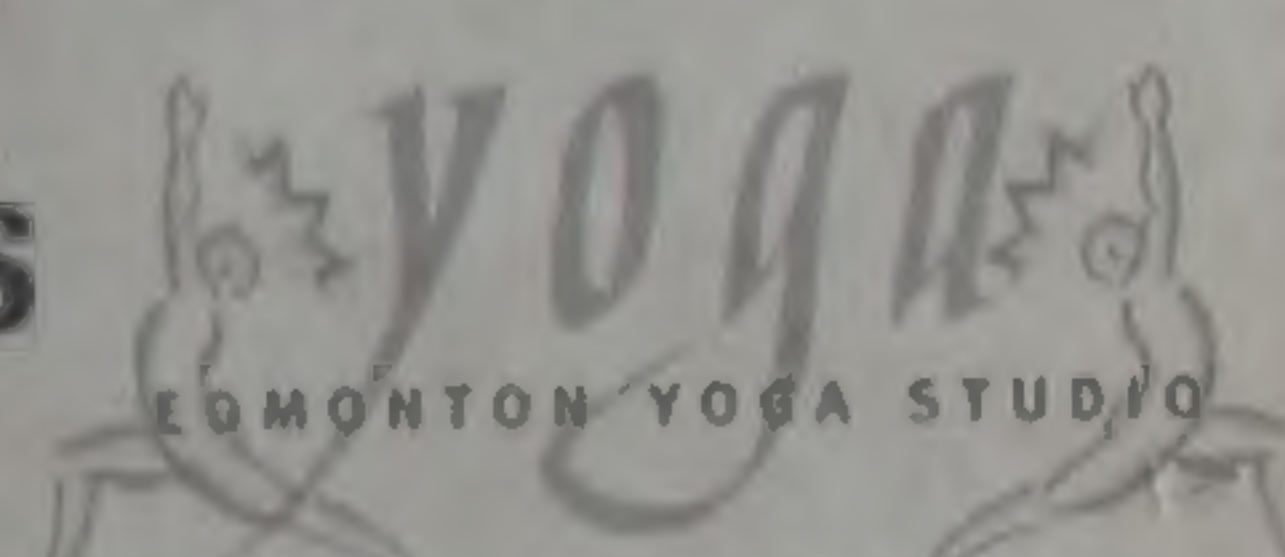
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ARTIST TO ARTIST

The Alberta Society of Artists: Call for Membership. Submission deadline is **Mar. 1, 2006**. (780) 426-0072 www.artists-society.ab.ca

Canadian Badlands Passion Play (Drumheller Alberta) Auditions: King's University College, 9125-50 St. Mar. 1 & Mar. 28 (3:30-9:30pm). Ph Daniel van Heyst 465-3500 ext. 8020 (w)/455-9360 (h) www.canadianpassionplay.com

Good comedy writer seeks opportunities. Sample material available. Slapstick Inc #212 9258-110A Ave Edmonton T5H1J4.

Edmonton May Week Workers Art Show-Call for Artists: Worker's art show. To submit, please ph Tom Gale at 433-0757. **Deadline: Apr. 11.**

Edmonton Women's Film Society-call for film submissions for feminist film festival. www.EWFS.ca **Deadline: Mar. 31**

Call for Submissions: Gallery at Milner. **Deadline: Feb. 28.** Ph 496-7030 for info.

WALTERDALE: Costuming in Community Theatre with Geri Dittich. **Sat, Feb. 25.** free (member)/\$25 (non-member) 454-8806 pre-register.

If the HAT fits call for submissions, open to Alberta artists. **Deadline: Mar. 15, 2006.** For info Ph 481-9028, e-mail: danielle@daniellefitydesign.ca

CALL TO ENTER: NEXTFEST 2006 June 1-11
Visual Arts Submission **deadline Mar. 15.**
contact nexfestarts@gmail.com for info.

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Of anal sex and use of the English language: a treatise

ADVICE

ALT.SEX.COLUMN
ANDREA WEMERSON
altsex@altsexcolumn.com

Dear Andrea:

Why are blow jobs so compellingly fascinating? As the oft-happy penis-possessing receptor [sic] of said sexual servicing, I have spoken with few about this subject.

After getting beyond the gags about gag-reflex suppression, I wondered aloud with a gay male friend. He thought perhaps it was related to primal longing for breast-feeding. While that explains the lactating-babes section of the local sex shoppe, it seems excessively Freudian. I have thought that perhaps it's breast-feeding envy: feeding is nurturing. Also, the mouth is quite close to the eyes, which will watch while waiting and being watched. What say you?

Love, Using My Head

Dear Head:

What ho, sirrah, oft-happy penis-possessing recipient of sexual servicing? Why sound like such a prancing ponce, say I, when you could write your letter in normal English and sound less worthy of a sound kick in the codpiece? What say you?

I think you and your friend are using your heads perhaps a little too hard, and that if a primal longing for the breast is too Freudian an explanation, what is "breast-feeding envy," for chrissake? I say that guys like blow jobs because they feel good, and some people like giving them because it's hot to do something that makes the person you're doing it to gasp and moan and beg for more.

I also think that if any of this has the slightest connection to any primal longings for breasts or eyes or any body part not commonly encountered in somebody's pants, I'll eat my head, and yours.

Love, Andrea

Dear Andrea:

Please help and a longtime debate between my best friend and I, is seamen fattening?

Love, Kinda Wondering

Dear Kinda:

Seamen, tending to be burly types, would be very fattening indeed if you ate the whole thing. Semen, on the other hand, is a mere teaspoon or so of protein with a little sugar and couldn't put a pound on you unless you lived a lifestyle so dangerous and disgusting that weight gain would be the least of your problems.

Love, Andrea

Dear Andrea:

Have you ever heard of a Tony Danza, in reference to a form of "Donkey Punch?"
Love, Vaguely Wondering

Dear Vague:

Why or how I became the go-to girl for questions about punching women in the head while having anal sex with them I couldn't tell you, nor am I proud of it, but since we're here I might as well tell you that a Tony Danza is, of course, punching a girl in the head while having anal sex with her and shouting "Who's The Boss?"

Before any feminists of the "that's not funny" persuasion write me outraged letters I should point out that there is absolutely nothing preventing women from shouting "Who's The Boss?" while having violent anal sex with men, nor are same-sex variations in any way unfeasible.

Love, Andrea

Dear Andrea:

What are the benefits for women to want to try anal sex?

Love, Really Wondering

Dear Really:

I'm tempted to say "They get more dates" but I suppose that reflects a rather jaundiced view of the contemporary dating scene. Or does it? It does seem true that anal sex appears slowly to be repeating the journey that oral sex took from forbidden (albeit in fact practiced) to kinky to "normal," over the second half of the last century.

But men are always going to enjoy a slight edge in the Anal Sex Appreciation Olympics, since not only are they the ones getting the most direct stimulation out of insertive anal sex, but also, due to the convenient placement of the prostate gland, out of receptive anal intercourse.

This isn't to say that there are not women, and plenty of them, who enjoy the receptive sort on its own merits, and not just as a dirty thrill or a way to make their man feel very special indeed. Depending upon various peculiarities of anatomy, receptive anal penetration can and may stimulate any number of internal structures (internal clitoris, G-spot, et cetera) and, while most women will not make it all the way to orgasm based on backdoor lovin' alone, a few can.

Add in the thrill of the forbidden, access to clitoris, freedom from fear of pregnancy (although not, alas, from STDs), and a pathetically grateful partner, and you can see that the "benefits" are neither obscure nor inconsequential. Provided you like that sort of thing.

Love, Andrea

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